

**F.W. Harvey and the First World War:  
A biographical study of F.W. Harvey and his place in the  
First World War literary canon.**

Submitted as a dissertation towards the degree of PhD in English  
by James Grant Repshire, January 2016.

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### **Abstract**

F.W. Harvey's poetry was more popular during the First World War than many – if not most – of those whom we celebrate as 'the war poets' today. He is unique among the poets of that war for his insight into the life of the British POW in Germany, and for the influence of his work in the first of the British trench journals, the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*. Yet, he has received little national attention since his death in 1957, and scholarly work on his life is lacking, largely owing to a deficit of publicly-available primary sources and original material regarding his life and works.

This has resulted in a failure to place him properly within the literary canon of the First World War. The recent discovery of Harvey's papers allows us to examine his life and his contemporary cultural impact, and more fully to evaluate the value of his work and what it tells us about the First World War experience.

Using Harvey's papers, this biographical study will reconstruct the historical details of his life as they relate to the First World War. Concurrently, it will develop our understanding of his war-related work. This will demonstrate Harvey's influence during the war, first as a trench poet, then as the poetic voice of the British POW. It will also examine how Harvey's work continued to be affected by the war in the years after the armistice. The result will be a greater appreciation of the life and importance of a First World War poet whose voice was in danger of being lost to time.

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## List of Abbreviations

### Abbreviations Used in References

BHK – Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Kriegsarchiv, Munich

Bod. – Bodleian Library

CEH – Dr C.E. Hart, OBE, of Coleford Collection

CPR – Clearwell Parish Registers

FWH – F.W. Harvey Collection

FWWAMD – The First World War by Adam Matthew Digital online

GA – Gloucestershire Archives

IG – Ivor Gurney Collection

LAC – Library and Archives Canada online

S&J – Papers of Sidgwick & Jackson, Publishers

SA – *The Spectator* Archive online

SoGM – Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum Archives

TJUM – Trench Journals and Unit Magazines of the First World War by

ProQuest online

TLSHA – *Times Literary Supplement* Historical Archives online

### Other Abbreviations Found in Text

DCM – Distinguished Conduct Medal

MC – Military Cross

NCO – Non-Commissioned Officer

POW – Prisoner of War

*TLS* – *Times Literary Supplement*



F.W. Harvey wearing his uniform as a second lieutenant of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion (Territorial Force), Gloucestershire Regiment, with his Distinguished Conduct Medal ribbon visible above his left breast pocket, c. 1916. GA, FWH, D12912/4/2/1.



## Introduction: F.W. Harvey and the First World War

Fifty-five years after his death, the war poet F.W. Harvey made the national news, when the BBC reported that his personal papers would be made public:

‘War poet FW Harvey’s work to go on show in Gloucestershire’

6 November 2012, Gloucestershire – Long forgotten letters, papers and manuscripts detailing the life of a World War I poet from Gloucestershire are to go on public display.

Frederick William Harvey is known for his poetry and acts of courage during the Great War, when he was captured and attempted daring escapes.

Since his death, his family has looked after the papers.

Now the Gloucestershire Archives and the University of Exeter are to curate the work for experts and the public to use.<sup>1</sup>

While the BBC article claimed that Harvey’s family had kept the papers since his death, in reality they were at one point forgotten and all but lost. When he died in 1957 his papers remained in the family home in the Forest of Dean village of Yorkley. His widow, Sarah Anne, died in 1972, and the house and its contents were inherited by their son, Patrick, who lived a solitary life in the home, never marrying, and rarely having visitors. He was highly protective of his father’s legacy, going so far as to deny the existence of the papers to researchers. When Patrick died in 2007, the house was left abandoned. Ownership of the estate passed to his older sister, Eileen Griffiths (née Harvey). She in turn gave the house to her daughter, Elaine Jackson, and her husband. With an eye towards renovating the dilapidated home, they conducted an initial audit of it in 2010, when they were surprised to discover Harvey’s papers stored in a chest in his old office. These they placed into the stewardship of the F.W. Harvey Society, appointing society leaders Roger Deeks and Teresa Davies as

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<sup>1</sup> ‘War Poet FW Harvey’s Work to Go on Show in Gloucestershire’, *BBC News Online*, 6 November 2012 <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-20225430>> [accessed 19 May 2015].

trustees to see to their proper preservation. The trustees worked with the Gloucestershire Archives, and eventually contacted Tim Kendall of the University of Exeter, who was able to secure funding through the University's REACT (Research & Enterprise in Arts & Creative Technology) programme. This allowed a PhD researcher to catalogue and preserve the papers at the Archives, while also writing a dissertation on Harvey's life and work using the papers – to which post I was appointed.

I received the papers from the F.W. Harvey Society on 28 September 2012 at the Gloucestershire Archives. They arrived in several large boxes, brimming with aged documents, envelopes, books, and even a curiously-carved stick with 'Leeuwarden-Holland' stencilled on it.<sup>2</sup> I moved the papers to my desk in the Archives' Collections Management Office, where I would be working on cataloguing and preserving them for the next year, and began to search through the documents.

The breadth of the collection was incredible. It would reveal manuscripts of hundreds of Harvey's poems, several hundred letters, BBC radio scripts, personal notebooks, scrapbooks, and multitudes of ephemera related to Harvey's life. The first thing that I decided to analyse closely was a large faded-green envelope labelled 'autobiographical novel' (see figure 1). I had already been informed that the typescript of an unpublished novel was discovered with the papers. This came as a surprise, Harvey's only known venture into published prose having been his POW memoirs, *Comrades in Captivity* (1920).

Many of the pages were out of order, so I set to work reorganising them. A few missing pages were later located amongst the rest of the documents. The novel turned out to be an imaginative, fictionalised account of Harvey's early life

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<sup>2</sup> Wooden Signpost, Leeuwarden-Holland, [1918], GA, FWH, D12912/11/1.

and wartime service. The story's hero was named 'Will Harvey', the name by which Harvey was known among friends. (For clarity, in this dissertation the name 'Will Harvey' or 'Will' refers to the novel's fictional character, not the historical figure, except in direct quotations from primary sources.) Will was based closely on Harvey himself: a Gloucestershire lad educated at the King's School, Gloucester, and then Rossall School; who wished to be a poet but was forced into a legal career; and who was among the first to enlist in the Gloucestershire Regiment at news of Britain's entry into the First World War. The novel was everything that a biographer or literary scholar could ask for. It contained childhood and developmental scenes, stories of the protagonist's early legal career, war stories, and background stories to poems. Some of these tales were obviously based on reality, such as scenes describing Will's exploits of derring-do on night patrols in no-man's-land, which eventually earned him the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM), just as it had for Harvey. Others were clearly fantasy, such as the story of the mysterious gypsy woman who disguises herself as a man to follow Will into the army. Most lie somewhere in between – yet all are telling in one way or another of how Harvey perceived his own life, particularly in its relation to the First World War.

Frederick William Harvey – who published as 'F.W. Harvey' – was among the most popular poets of the First World War, even though after the war his name gradually faded into the background as the canon of First World War poetry evolved into its current form. The two collections that he published during the war sold thousands of copies over multiple editions, while his poems were reprinted in newspapers, journals, and anthologies. His success was largely owing to the popularity that he gained as a founding contributor to the first of the British trench journals, the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*. Following his capture, he

achieved further fame when he became the only poet to publish a collection while a POW, as German authorities allowed him to send his manuscripts home for publishing. These poems are by far the most valuable poetic resource we have for understanding the POW experience of that war.

Although Harvey's legacy faded, interest in his life and works has been renewed owing to the discovery of his papers and the efforts to preserve and research them. As Simon Barker wrote on his work with the archive of John Galsworthy, 'the archive reclaimed is also a reclaimed life'.<sup>3</sup> Barker called his project 'reclamation', as he was re-evaluating his subject using archival material that had been discarded and neglected.<sup>4</sup> The availability of Harvey's papers gives us the opportunity to reclaim his place within First World War literature. In her introduction to *The Boundaries of the Literary Archive*, Lisa Stead asserts that literary archives 'allow us to interrogate, dialogue with, and re-evaluate conventional conceptions of a writer, or to reclaim an author from critical or cultural obscurity'.<sup>5</sup> New research into Harvey's papers grants all of these things. It gives us the chance to understand Harvey in a way that could not have been done without this primary-source material, facilitating a greater understanding of a significant First World War poet whose voice was in danger of being lost.

This dissertation uses this new wealth of primary-source documents to establish Harvey's place in the First World War literary canon, through creation of the first archive-based biographical study of his life, which creates a meaningful understanding of his personal experience and the context in which

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<sup>3</sup> Simon Barker, 'Lost Property: John Galsworthy and the Search for "That Stuffed Shirt"', in *The Boundaries of the Literary Archive – Reclamation and Representation*, ed. by Carrie Smith and Lisa Stead (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013), pp. 91-104 (p. 93).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Lisa Stead, 'Introduction', in *Boundaries of the Literary Archive*, ed. by Smith and Stead, pp. 1-12 (p. 3).

he wrote. Currently Harvey is dismissed as a minor poet of only regional significance, and outside his native Gloucestershire he is often known more for his association with Ivor Gurney, if at all, than as a voice from the war in his own right. The mainstream canon of First World War poetry is generally limited to a narrow range of poets from whose work is chosen a relatively small selection of poems. Quality is one prerequisite for selection of these poems, but there is also a perceived bias towards poems that can be seen as emblematic of the futility of war. The poets themselves are often separated into major and minor. Examples of the major poets include soldiers such as Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen, Robert Graves, and Rupert Brooke, alongside non-combatants such as Thomas Hardy, A.E. Housman, and Rudyard Kipling. These celebrated names are followed by a selection of minor, but still well-regarded, soldier-poets such as Wilfrid Gibson, Julian Grenfell, and W.N. Hodgson. Harvey's work was a mainstay in First World War anthologies through to the 1960s, but it has been neglected in recent major anthologies despite this. Regard for Harvey has started to slide below that of these other, now better known, minor poets. As the recent surge in Ivor Gurney's reputation has shown, there is room for more in the canon of the war's poetry. Within the canon, Sassoon is known as the poet of protest, Owen for his pity and horror, Gurney as the poet who was broken, Brooke for his early-war patriotism, and others such as Grenfell and Hodgson for simply one remarkable poem each. For what, if anything, should Harvey be known? Why does he matter?

As Vivien Noakes asserts in her ground-breaking anthology *Voices of Silence – An Alternative Book of First World War Poetry* (2006), Harvey was a poet of 'remarkable quality' who raised the literary value of the 5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester

*Gazette*, helping it to achieve a level of notable success.<sup>6</sup> Being responsible – nearly on his own – for the early success of one of the first and most influential trench papers is enough to justify a higher regard for Harvey than he currently holds. New evidence presented here shows that his work also inspired other trench journals. Furthermore, Harvey became the only poet to publish poetry while a POW, and is the only well-known poet to write about prison-camp life. He was also the only significant poet to see front-line service both in the ranks and as an officer, giving a perspective from both sides of the military's social divide. His post-war poetry illustrates how the war continued to haunt veterans, and how the failures of the subsequent peace led many down a path of disenchantment.

All of these facets are visible in his work, and give us a critical insight into important, but often neglected, aspects of the First World War and its poetry. Harvey's most popular poetry was written in the trenches and in prison camps, and offers insight into a soldier's thoughts during his direct involvement with war. Perhaps for this reason, Harvey's poetry often tends towards the 'tommy-humour' needed to survive mentally, and towards thoughts of more pleasant things than combat, such as the joys of home. Noakes asserts that humour was a 'characteristic, important and recurring feature' of First World War poetry, unfortunately lost in our popular understanding of the war, owing to its omission from more recent anthologies.<sup>7</sup> She argues that 'such humour was a lifeline' used by soldiers to survive day-to-day miseries.<sup>8</sup> Scholars of poetry run the risk of losing sight of the men who fought – the real human cost of the war – when they emphasise the horrific side of conflict, at the expense of its human

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<sup>6</sup> Vivien Noakes, ed., *Voices of Silence – The Alternative Book of First World War Poetry*, (Stroud: Sutton Publishing Ltd., 2006), p. xv.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xi.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xii.

dimension. To the soldier in the front lines, Harvey's humour was more important than Sassoon's protest or Owen's pity, as it directly improved the lives of the men in the trenches through entertainment and escapism, no matter how imperceptibly. This combination of humour and homesickness would be a hallmark of trench literature, as Graham Seal explains:

The inescapable reality of the zones of war had to be dealt with by two strategies: clinging to the familiar and homely, and reprocessing elements of the trench experience into usually satirical and humorous expressions that were effectively elisions but also communications with the prosecutors of war.<sup>9</sup>

Harvey was among the first to realise that his voice in the trench press would be heard not just by comrades at the front, but by an interested public in Britain. Poems such as 'To the Patriots of Poplar' directly attacked war-mongers and opportunists at home, sending a message across the English Channel from the trenches. Knowing that the public was listening meant that Harvey would at times question the purpose of the war in poems such as 'If We Return'. He continued to act as a voice for the soldier when he became a POW, describing the experience of captured officers through poetry published in 1917 as *Gloucestershire Friends: Poems from a German Prison Camp*. It was as a POW that he most profoundly questioned the purpose of the war, gradually coming to the conclusion that it was a necessary evil leading to a post-war societal rebirth. Newly discovered manuscripts show that he began to work on a collection titled 'A New England' expressly to promote this idea; its remnants survive as a small section within what became his third collection, *Ducks, and Other Verses* (1919).

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<sup>9</sup> Graham Seal, *The Soldiers' Press: Trench Journals in the First World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 5.

This dissertation will also consider how the First World War continued to influence Harvey and his writing for the rest of his life. As the works of Edmund Blunden, Robert Graves, and Siegfried Sassoon have shown, much of what the poets wrote years later has had just as much – if not more – of an effect on our understanding and perceptions of the war as what they wrote during the hostilities. Harvey is no exception. On returning home, he found himself attempting to make sense of the war's loss, and the passing of the years changed his perception of the war's prosecution and purpose.

Harvey claimed in the preface to his novel that

the fact stands that for this generation the war must be the supreme historical event. For until the sacrifice is understood and justified our hands are unclean. [...] Therefore the war must be an obsession to all; and until we have realised it, it will be a shameful one.<sup>10</sup>

Harvey himself realised that his involvement in and with the war was the most important aspect of his life. He felt that his life before the war lacked purpose, and when war came he saw it as a welcome chance to escape an aimless life and to dedicate himself to a cause. He thrived during the war, and after the cessation of hostilities it became apparent that the war would always be an integral part of his identity. Harvey is remembered primarily for his wartime work, and the First World War was unquestionably the height of his fame on all levels: locally in Gloucestershire, nationally in the UK, and even internationally. For these reasons, it is imperative that this, the first major research project to come from the rediscovery of his papers, should create a more complete understanding of this facet of his life and work.

What was previously known about Harvey was detailed in his POW memoirs, two full-length biographies, one short biography, and brief mentions in

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<sup>10</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Will Harvey – A Romance' (author's manuscript), 1935, p. ii, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.



biographies of his best-friend Ivor Gurney. None of the biographies benefited from full access to Harvey's personal papers, and all had to be created mostly through personal recollections and through Harvey's own published works. Owing to this lack of primary sources, each contains significant but understandable mistakes.

*Comrades in Captivity – A Record of Life in Seven German Prison Camps* (1920) was written by Harvey almost immediately after his return to England and civilian life. Among the many POW memoirs to be published during and after the war, Harvey's stands out as the most entertaining and informative, with only Alec Waugh's *The Prisoners of Mainz* (1919) worthy of comparison. The vast majority of POW memoirs were written by officers. They, like Harvey, benefited from the upper-middle-class's access to 'the time, resources, and book-trade connections' that allowed publication.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, their POW experiences featured the more publishable tales of 'escape, resistance to interrogation, [and] "prison 'universities'"[,] that ultimately shaped the popular memory of First World War captivity,' rather than the mundane and often brutal forced labour suffered by POWs from the ranks.<sup>12</sup> Unlike many officer-POW memoirs, Harvey's is not an 'escape narrative', the form of adventurous story that the public craved, which focused primarily on the act of breakout and subsequent flight. He tells the POW story as most officers experienced it. This was the story of enduring months or years under the immense psychological pressure of confinement and boredom. He begins with the circumstances that led to his capture in August 1916, and ends with his return to Gloucestershire in early 1919. Harvey took the opportunity to highlight

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<sup>11</sup> Shafquat Towheed, Francesca Benatti, and Edmund G.C. King, 'Readers and Reading in the First World War', *Yearbook of English Studies*, 45 (2015), 239-61 (249).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

some of his POW poetry, often telling short stories about how a poem came to be – stories which can now be compared with evidence in his papers to establish their veracity, and which at times seem to take artistic liberties. Further evidence in his papers shows that a few paragraphs of the book were even plagiarised, or at the very least Harvey was cavalier in his use of source material. Despite this, *Comrades in Captivity* does paint a colourful and very human picture of POW life, and it accomplished Harvey's goal of telling the story of the admirable comradeship between British and Commonwealth POWs from 1916-1919.

*F.W. Harvey – Soldier, Poet* (1988) by Anthony Boden is the best of the Harvey biographies. It was first published to coincide with the centenary of Harvey's birth, while an updated edition was published in 1998. Boden is a founding member of the Ivor Gurney Society, who became attracted to Harvey's work through his study of Gurney. Much of his research was based on interviews with people who knew Harvey. As with all such research, this has the benefit of allowing the researcher a glimpse into the perception of a figure as it was held by those who knew him, helping in many ways to understand better the personality of the subject. However, there are pitfalls associated with oral history as well. The researcher must be aware that 'memory operates along typical "mechanisms", which telescope, superimpose, [and] fuse', until memories are distorted and the line between imaginary and real is blurred, despite a subject's attempts to be as accurate as possible.<sup>13</sup> An individual's memory of a person or event is subject to bias; various factors can influence how a person remembers – or even chooses to remember – a subject. For this reason, biographers find that a considered and balanced use of oral histories

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<sup>13</sup> Luisa Passerini, 'Memory', *History Workshop* (1983), 195-96 (195).

and written records yields the best results.<sup>14</sup> Boden had a wealth of access to oral histories of Harvey, but little access to archival history. One of his interviewees was Harvey's son Patrick. Although we now know that he possessed his father's papers all along, Patrick denied the documents' existence during his interviews, stating that they were burnt following Harvey's death. He claimed to have only a few documents left, which he shared with Boden.<sup>15</sup> Boden's book covers Harvey's entire life, but his dependence on *Comrades in Captivity* for biographical information ensures that he gives the most attention to Harvey's war years, particularly his time as a POW. Boden quotes these memoirs very liberally: roughly forty-three pages of material are simply long quotations from the book (not including poems and illustrations), including one continuous six-page quotation.<sup>16</sup> Still, Boden had a scarcity of material to work with; he certainly felt it was better to let Harvey tell the story himself at times. Regardless of any flaws, the book is a good starting point for researching Harvey, and broke the ground for others to follow.

Frances Townsend's *The Laureate of Gloucestershire – The Life and Works of F.W. Harvey* (1988) is only ninety pages long. Townsend's book, too, was published for Harvey's centenary, and it also relies heavily on interviews and personal recollections. The book's strength lies in the numerous anecdotal episodes of Harvey's life that Townsend gathered from interviews. Many of these are not available anywhere else, such as a story of Harvey and a

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<sup>14</sup> David J. Mitchell, "'Living Documents": Oral History and Biography', *Biography*, 3 (1980), 283-96 (285).

<sup>15</sup> Anthony Boden, *F.W. Harvey – Soldier, Poet*, Revised Edition (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd., 1998), p. 245. Unfortunately, the one letter that Boden cites in his book as being shown to him by Patrick, from the Poet Laureate John Masefield to Harvey on 19 December 1919, was not found in the Harvey papers and is most likely lost.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 174-80.

sergeant being sent on a counter-sniper patrol in no-man's-land.<sup>17</sup> The story occurs after Harvey's commission, yet there is no record of this patrol in the 2/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester's War Diary, nor anywhere else. Such relatively minor events were rarely worth noting in the context of the larger war, and it is only through personal histories that knowledge of them can be saved. Unfortunately, this episode in the book also illustrates one of its weaknesses. No citation is given for this information, so we do not know who related this story, and cannot assess its reliability. Scholarship in the book is sometimes tenuous, and at other times completely wrong. For example, Townsend cites Harvey's *A Gloucestershire Lad at Home and Abroad* (1916) as having been published in 1918, and makes significant errors in the publication history of that collection and his 1917 *Gloucestershire Friends: Poems from a German Prison Camp*, even though the correct information has always been easily available.<sup>18</sup> This biography is best used as a companion to other studies of Harvey, rather than as a stand-alone source.

Ross Davies's thirty-six page biography, *F.W. Harvey: Poet of Remembrance* (2009), contains little original research; the author relied instead on previously published works (the one archival document cited in the monograph was already quoted in full in Boden's biography), and notes in his introduction that his research was guided and influenced by Boden.<sup>19</sup> It contains some errors in Harvey's biography, but by and large accomplishes its goal of being a short introduction to his life and works.

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<sup>17</sup> Frances Townsend, *The Laureate of Gloucestershire – The Life and Work of F.W. Harvey* (Bristol: Redcliffe Press, 1988), p. 31.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>19</sup> Ross Davies, *F.W. Harvey: Poet of Remembrance*, in *The War Poets Series*, 25 (London: Cecil Woolf Publishers, 2009), p. 16; Boden, p. 38.

The shortcomings of all three of these biographies can now be corrected thanks to the Harvey papers and to further original research. It would be ungenerous not to note that each of these prior biographers lacked funding and the access to primary sources. This dissertation has been able to make a considerable contribution on existing knowledge as a result of these advantages.

Given Harvey's importance as a poet of the First World War, further scholarly work must be done on his poetic development and style, which was seldom touched on in previous biographies. Harvey's papers have opened a wide avenue for understanding the context in which he wrote. Manuscript poems, many with revision notes and multiple drafts, are now available. Harvey was not a particularly innovative poet, and at the worst of times could be a careless one – but at his best he left some remarkable and insightful poems, such as 'If We Return', which, as early as 1916, asked soldiers to consider what their role in society would be after the war, and encouraged them to channel the pain and suffering they had experienced into a more compassionate relationship with their fellow man. He resisted Modernism, and wrote essays (now available among his papers) attacking it. His novel was to some degree an attempt to revive Romanticism, reflected in its title 'Will Harvey – A Romance'. This is not to imply that his poetry did not evolve and improve – his 1925 collection *September* was considered for the Hawthornden Prize, and this dissertation argues that his best poetry was written in 1928 and never gained the reputation in his lifetime that it deserved. His poetry was obviously influenced by A.E. Housman's, as signalled by the title of Harvey's first collection, *A Gloucestershire Lad*. Among his papers was also discovered a notebook which he filled with handwritten copies of hundreds of his favourite

poems, which has revealed the influence of dozens of poets, from Romantics such as Percy Shelley, William Wordsworth, and Robert Burns, to later poets such as Rudyard Kipling, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Lionel Johnson.<sup>20</sup>

Without his papers, many nuances of Harvey's work would never have been fully understood.

Biographies of Ivor Gurney are the only other published sources with any notable amount of material on Harvey. The information in these is limited, as researchers working on Gurney would not be able to dedicate too much original research time to Harvey. Harvey is often portrayed in these as a significant, but provincial side-note to Gurney's life, when in fact he was a steadfast friend, a leading influence, a peer, and an artistic collaborator. Trivial mistakes regarding Harvey in Gurney biographies show that insufficient regard has been given to his role: one recent biography implies that his first collection, *A Gloucestershire Lad*, was merely a single published poem, further implying that his second collection, *Gloucestershire Friends*, was his first published collection.<sup>21</sup> Michael Hurd's seminal biography of Gurney states that 'There can be no doubt that it was [Harvey's] example that first set Gurney on the poet's path'.<sup>22</sup> Yet Hurd does little to establish and verify this claim, other than noting throughout the book how Gurney followed Harvey's successes, and drawing some parallels between their poetic careers. As with other authors, Hurd lacked primary sources related to Harvey, and would have benefited from the evidence of the men's creative partnership that is found in the Harvey Collection. In the course

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<sup>20</sup> Early notebooks kept by F.W. Harvey – Notebook 1, 1909-1914, GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/Notebook 1.

<sup>21</sup> Pamela Blevins, *Ivor Gurney and Marion Scott – Song of Pain and Beauty* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2008), p. 112, p. 123.

<sup>22</sup> Michael Hurd, *The Ordeal of Ivor Gurney* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 24.

of this dissertation, Harvey and Gurney's relationship as it relates to the First World War will be examined as relevant.<sup>23</sup>

One new published source on Harvey's life has recently appeared: *The Lost Novel of F.W. Harvey: A War Romance* (2014). This is the published version of Harvey's novel that was discovered among his papers (the manuscript's original title, 'Will Harvey – A War Romance', was modified by the publishers). Its appearance was the result of my collaboration with the Gloucestershire Archives, the F.W. Harvey Society, and Harvey's descendants, working with The History Press to see the book published to coincide with Gloucestershire's commemorations of the centenary of Britain's entry into the First World War. The book appeared with minimal editing, and with a foreword in which I explained the history of the novel and its significance, and briefly analysed some of its themes and the differences between the story and Harvey's actual life.<sup>24</sup> Harvey's 'Author's Note' at the beginning of his typescript explained that the novel was fictional, but also semi-autobiographical.<sup>25</sup> This dissertation is the first study of Harvey to make use of his novel as a source; as such it has been an invaluable insight into Harvey's mind. Much of the novel's value comes from a consideration of which characters and events in it are real, and which are the products of Harvey's imagination. The 'Author's Note' also claims that none of the characters in the novel were based on people who were still living at the time of his final attempt to publish it in 1935.<sup>26</sup> This is not true.

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<sup>23</sup> For further information on the increased understanding that the F.W. Harvey Collection has given us of the Harvey-Gurney friendship, see James Grant Repshire, 'The Well-Loved Fields of Old: F.W. Harvey and Ivor Gurney's friendship and creative partnership during the First World War as seen through study of the F.W. Harvey Collection', *The Ivor Gurney Society Journal*, 20, (2014), 7-30.

<sup>24</sup> James Grant Repshire, 'Foreword', in *The Lost Novel of F.W. Harvey: A War Romance*, by F.W. Harvey (Stroud: The History Press, 2014), pp. 6-12.

<sup>25</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. i, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

The title character was obviously based on Harvey himself, while Will's mother in the novel is clearly based on Harvey's actual mother who lived until 1943. Ivor Gurney appears twice through fleeting mentions in the novel. The story is not just of Will Harvey, but also of his brother Eric, closely modelled on Harvey's real brother Eric, who died in the war. The most important character after Will does not appear to have been based on any single individual: the enigmatic and mysterious girl known only as 'Gypsy'. What she represents is, as I will show, the most important aspect of the novel for understanding how Harvey viewed the First World War.

### **Research Methodology**

This dissertation offers a detailed examination of the papers of the F.W. Harvey Collection. The task of cataloguing and preserving the fonds began on 28 September 2012, and was completed with a formal launch at the Gloucestershire Archives on 8 November 2013. The collection is large and wide-ranging: over 700 individual items of correspondence, including letters to and from key artistic figures such as Gurney (seventy alone), Marion Scott, Herbert Howells, George Bernard Shaw, Evelyn Waugh, and others; over 350 loose manuscript/typescript poems along with draft material for five unpublished poetry collections; the full manuscript for *Gloucestershire Friends: Poems From a German Prison Camp* (complete with German censor's stamps) and the manuscript for what became *Ducks, and Other Verses*; nineteen personal notebooks, which included poems, short stories, personal recollections, and so on; forty-five short prose pieces (essays, lectures, and short stories); two plays; a novel; thirteen scrapbooks and dozens of loose scrapbook pages and newspaper clippings; roughly thirty documents relating to Harvey's military



service, with rare examples of POW-produced documents such as programmes for prison-camp plays and concerts; seventy-eight items from Harvey's personal library, including periodicals in which he was published; twenty-eight BBC radio scripts along with 146 accompanying BBC letters to Harvey, and 133 more letters to his heirs from various media outlets regarding posthumous broadcasts; and hundreds of other personal items ranging from photographs, legal practice and training certificates, financial and medical documents, and dozens of programmes from organisational events, many including further unpublished Harvey poems.

Cataloguing these items has proven immensely advantageous to this research, revealing vital new information on Harvey and the context in which he wrote. Currently, popular archival theory tells us that the archivist must

adhere to two principles: the principle of *respect des fonds* and the principle of respect for original order. The former dictates that all of the records of a single creator be kept together as a whole, separate from the records of any other creator, while the latter dictates that records within a fonds be preserved in the order in which they were used and/or maintained by their creator.<sup>27</sup>

*Respect des fonds* has been established by the very nature of creating a Harvey Collection, keeping all of his personal documents together as a whole. Original order, however, has been difficult to establish. Harvey's son Patrick clearly reorganised his father's papers for his own purposes, as evidenced by notes in Patrick's handwriting found in many places on the documents. Furthermore, original order was lost by the transportation and storage of the documents prior to their arrival at the archives: constant reshuffling of the contents by placing them into different boxes and binders will have taken its toll, even if it proved necessary for the ultimate preservation of the papers. This is

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<sup>27</sup> Jennifer Douglas, 'Original Order, Added Value? Archival Theory and the Douglas Coupland Fonds', in *Boundaries of the Literary Archive*, ed. by Smith and Stead, pp. 45-57 (p. 45).

often the case with private papers, making it nearly impossible to restore the original order of a collection; and in any case, the creator of the documents may never have kept them in any useful order to begin with.<sup>28</sup> It is often best simply to order the documents with the researcher in mind, establishing categories that enable study rather than holding to a false sense of the sanctity of the original creator's method of storage and use.<sup>29</sup> Many documents were clearly out of any useful order, often with their original staples or other fasteners removed, and with the contents spread out and hidden among the thousands of other documents. A great amount of work was done in simply analysing typewriter fonts, handwriting, ink colours, staple holes, paper-clip rust marks, and so forth to establish which of Harvey's poetry manuscript/typescripts were originally created together. By grouping like items together categorically, the closest thing to a working order for the papers has been established. As archival theorists often assert, there is a 'close connection between the nature of the archive and the nature of its creator'.<sup>30</sup> In cataloguing the papers, I made every attempt to understand Harvey's working order and to make that order evident where possible through notes in catalogue entries, while also making the papers accessible to researchers by grouping items categorically and chronologically.

There were already several documents in the Gloucestershire Archives relating to Harvey prior to the accession of the F.W. Harvey Collection. The most important is a scrapbook that Harvey seems to have loaned to his friend, the local historian Cyril Hart, who later deposited it in the archives.<sup>31</sup> This scrapbook was the only piece of Harvey's personal papers that was available to

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<sup>28</sup> Douglas, p. 48.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>31</sup> Scrapbook of F.W. Harvey, Containing Miscellaneous Notes and Manuscripts of Poems, 1911-20, Mostly 1911-13, GA, CEH, D3921.II.38.

researchers prior to the discovery of the Harvey Collection, and is occasionally cited by his previous biographers. It consists mostly of pages from various pocket notebooks, from roughly 1911-1920, that Harvey had torn out and pasted in the scrapbook in order to preserve them. The notebooks that the pages were removed from no longer survive. The scrapbook is dense with high-quality information, as Harvey selected for preservation only that which he thought worth keeping. It has proven especially useful in its evidence of the influence that A.E. Housman had on Harvey's poetry, as well as including several notes by Harvey that record thoughts on his pre-war life in London and on his combat experiences – all of which previous biographers seem to have missed.

More Harvey-related documents are available in the Ivor Gurney Collection at the Gloucestershire Archives (reference D10500), primarily in the form of a few letters to and from each man. The Gurney Collection was not fully catalogued at the time that the previous Harvey biographies were written, having only been properly organised and stored recently, thanks to a University of Exeter-funded doctoral research project similar to this one, completed by Phillip Lancaster. The most useful letters in this collection have proven not to be the direct correspondence between Harvey and Gurney, but instead the letters from Gurney to others that mention Harvey. Previous biographers used such documents, although as shall be seen, the information in them was sometimes badly misinterpreted.

Documents held in the collections of the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum have been invaluable in recreating Harvey's experience in the trenches of the Western Front, particularly the war-diaries of the 1/5<sup>th</sup> and 2/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters. These give day-to-day details of the major activities that each unit

was involved in. They also track the assignment and re-assignment of all officers, which, combined with each unit's Roll of Officers, has helped to pinpoint Harvey's movements following his commission. As shall be seen, previous biographers' misunderstanding of these resources has led to some significant errors regarding the dates of Harvey's front-line service. (These errors could also have been avoided by researching the Harvey papers in the Bodleian's Sidgwick & Jackson collection, which none of these biographers have used). Any work on Harvey's front-line service must, of course, also rely on the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, of which original issues from several months exist among Harvey's papers.

Harvey's papers are the key to his legacy, and are the lasting embodiment of his personality. It is therefore fitting that the rediscovery of his papers has led to a re-examination of his life and works. Both Harvey and his papers had nearly been lost to us through neglect, and our understanding of, and connection to, the First World War experience would have been that much more diminished. The following chapters mark the beginning of this vital process of rediscovery.

## Chapter I: Before the War

### March 1888 – August 1914

The United Kingdom had been at war for four days on 8 August 1914, when F.W. Harvey and his brother Eric travelled to Gloucester to enlist. The Harvey brothers came from an emergent middle-class family, keen to display the patriotism expected of their class and their public-school backgrounds. The young men who rallied to the colours in these first few days – even before the famous mass enlistments that followed the defeat at Mons later in the month – were among Britain's most patriotic and enthusiastic. Harvey had been an idealist as a youth, with two dreams in life: one was to find adventure pursuing a worthy goal – or 'romance' as he called it, hinting at his admiration for the Romantic Movement – and the other was to be recognised as a poet. He was now aged twenty-six, and both had eluded him. His chance for adventure faded away as necessity and family pressure forced him into a legal career that he had no enthusiasm for. He had attempted to write poetry in his spare time, but was unable to achieve publication. As he sank into depression, his inspiration to write suffered as well, and he had come near to a mental breakdown.

The advent of war would give him a fresh opportunity for 'romance', as he prepared to fight in a just cause alongside the men of his beloved Gloucestershire. Harvey fiercely loved his native county, so there was little chance that he would have joined anything but a Gloucestershire regiment. As the son of a horse trader with plenty of experience in the saddle, it would have been logical for him to join the prestigious 1<sup>st</sup> Royal Gloucestershire Hussars as a cavalryman. In addition, his educational and professional background meant that he could have held out for an officer's commission. His brother Roy had done just that, joining the Royal Wiltshire Yeomanry (a cavalry regiment), and

quickly managing a commission.<sup>1</sup> Instead, Harvey and Eric chose to enlist as common soldiers in the infantry of the Gloucestershire Regiment, joining their 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, which was the local Territorial Force unit. Those who volunteered for immediate overseas service – which included the Harvey brothers – were separated into a first-line battalion, designated the 1/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion. While the three oldest Harvey brothers joined the Army immediately on the outbreak of the war, the youngest brother, Bernard, stayed at home to help Matilda Harvey run the farm. He would be killed in a motorcycle accident that September, necessitating a one-year temporary discharge for Eric to run the farm; when Eric returned to the army he was immediately able to use his Oxford education to gain a commission as an officer.<sup>2</sup> Harvey's decision to enlist in the ranks and not push for an immediate commission may have been indicative of his egalitarian beliefs, and foreshadowed his decision later in life to reject the middle-class lifestyle. Still, it was by no means unheard of at this time. As Richard Holmes tells us, prior to the war the British Army was a reflection of the class system; however, those who answered the call for volunteers during the war 'were a far less accurate reflection, and thousands of well-educated men served in the ranks'.<sup>3</sup>

The influences of Harvey's youth, education, and early-life development are key to understanding his wartime life and works. Even in the novel 'Will Harvey', his self-styled 'war book', he dedicated the first 176 pages of typescript – just over 60% of its entirety – to his character's childhood, education, and early legal-career, before writing about the war.<sup>4</sup> He explained that this was to demonstrate, through the characters Will and Eric, that the developmental

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<sup>1</sup> Boden, p. 47, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 47-53.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Holmes, *The Western Front* (London: BBC Books, 2008), p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. ii, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

experiences of youth are unique to each individual, and although the war created a shared experience for millions, each individual's reaction to it was different because of their unique background.<sup>5</sup> Likewise, for us to understand why Harvey's wartime experience had such unique results, we must understand how his past prepared him for it.

As Harvey himself put it, '[he] was born, through no fault of his own, on 26<sup>th</sup> Mar 1888, and ha[d] lived the main (and certainly the best) part of his life in the village of Minsterworth in the beloved county of Gloucestershire'.<sup>6</sup> His father was Howard Harvey, a horse trader. Shortly after his son's birth, Howard purchased an estate in Minsterworth, which he renamed The Redlands, and moved the family there from nearby Hartpury. Harvey's mother was Cecilia Matilda Harvey (née Walters), known by most as Matilda, or simply 'Tillie'. Matilda was a generous and strong-willed woman, who would have a strong influence on Harvey throughout his life.<sup>7</sup> Born Frederick William Harvey, he would be known by friends and family as simply 'Will'; the eldest of six children, he was followed in birth by his brother Eric, sister Gladys, and then brothers Roy and Bernard.

Harvey learned to love the countryside while growing up in an exceptionally beautiful part of Gloucestershire that lies just outside the borders of the Forest of Dean. His early days were spent roaming the land surrounding The Redlands, where the example of his father's labourers at work impressed on him the value of making one's living from the land. He knew little other than the rural life until he began formal schooling. Coming from an Anglican family, Harvey was initially educated at the King's School, which was overseen by

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 120.

<sup>6</sup> Scrapbook of F.W. Harvey, GA, CEH, D3921.II.38.

<sup>7</sup> Boden, pp. 3-9.

Gloucester Cathedral. At the time, it had poor academic standing; as Boden tells us, the headmaster was a drunkard and the 'Dean and Chapter of the cathedral were only interested in the school as a source of choristers'.<sup>8</sup> The Harvey men until now had received only enough education to manage horse trading and nothing else. Matilda and Howard wanted more for their children, perhaps wishing to establish the family firmly as middle-class, landowning gentry. At age 14, Harvey was enrolled as a boarder at the prestigious Rossall School in Lancashire.<sup>9</sup> Here he would acquire the public-school education – and more importantly, the familiarity with public-school culture – that would prepare him for a professional career, and make him an attractive candidate for a military commission later in life.

In his first week at Rossall, an event took place which is the earliest evidence of Harvey's innate love of poetry. New students were expected to pass what was known as the 'fag test', requiring completion of some form of solo-performance of memorisation – a traditional school song, or perhaps something bawdier – in front of the entire school during the evening meal. It is thought that Harvey's governess had taught him poetry memorisation techniques prior to his enrolment at the King's School. When it was his turn, Harvey proceeded to recite the entirety of Browning's 303-line 'Pied Piper of Hamelin'. The impressive feat apparently aided him in finding social acceptance at the school.<sup>10</sup>

Harvey was not a studious or scholarly student, and his lifelong lack of ability to apply himself to work that did not interest him manifested itself early. He seems to have made an effort only in those subjects that he felt were worth

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 17-18.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 18-19; Townsend, pp. 13-14.



his interest, resulting in his class rankings ranging wildly depending on what was being taught.<sup>11</sup> His character, Will, shows the same trait in the novel. Harvey wrote that Will's academic progress could be viewed as 'a series of irregular jags: – the upward shoots showing the exact points at which subjects had seized his imagination. In this sense, he had no will power'.<sup>12</sup> His inability to focus on what was essential, rather than what interested him, would bring many disappointments and hardships.

Harvey also developed his love of sports and athleticism during his school days, an interest that would serve him well (and perhaps even save his life). At the King's School, he excelled at cricket and football, and began to develop strength through weightlifting.<sup>13</sup> At Rossall, too, he excelled on the pitch, playing cricket, football, and Rossall's peculiar version of hockey. Townsend notes that Harvey earned at least one cap, as well as colours for football and hockey; in his novel Harvey's character earns two caps and three colours.<sup>14</sup> Regardless of the numbers, Harvey certainly placed great value in sports and would continue to play them until failing health prevented it. In the novel, Will eventually earns a leadership position in his school house, solely thanks to his athletic abilities. As a result, he 'gradually acquired tact, learned to shoulder responsibility, to take quick decisions, and to appreciate and use organisation'.<sup>15</sup> Harvey was giving all credit for his development at the school to sports, not academic study. Not only did sport develop the leadership skills, love of camaraderie, and athleticism that would serve Harvey well in the army, it would also inspire some of his best wartime poetry.

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<sup>11</sup> Townsend, p. 14.

<sup>12</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 48, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>13</sup> Boden, p. 17.

<sup>14</sup> Townsend, p. 14; Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 72, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>15</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 66, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

Harvey also began to appreciate music during his school days. He was known for his fine baritone singing voice, which he seems to have developed as a teenager. His children claimed that among his early achievements was the winning of a singing prize at Rossall for a performance of John Hatton's setting of Robert Herrick's 'To Anthea'.<sup>16</sup> Harvey would continue to perform throughout his life. Perhaps his love of poetry informed this love of music, and the two art forms in tandem helped him to gain a better understanding of each. The composer Herbert Howells was later quoted in a BBC broadcast as saying: '[Harvey] had a curiously instinctive understanding of the art which was not precisely his. Music was not his art, but I can think of very few people whom I would more willingly talk to about music'.<sup>17</sup> Howells, along with Ivor Gurney, Herbert Brewer, and others would set many of Harvey's poems to music, perhaps drawn to his poetry owing to Harvey's own appreciation and understanding of their art.

Another characteristic recognised in Harvey – but seldom discussed – was a ferocious temper when his ire was aroused. Bishop Frodsham wrote in the first draft of his introduction for *Gloucestershire Friends* that 'Those who know him speak of a strain of fierce anger that sweeps him away at times, but is not this characteristic of many young Englishman who laugh so well and who "woo bright danger for a thrilling kiss?"'<sup>18</sup> Frodsham modified the statement at the urging of Harvey's cousin, Edith, changing it to reflect only Harvey's poems and not the man himself.<sup>19</sup> Yet Harvey himself illustrated this temper with a scene in his novel set during his character's early days at the King's School. An

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<sup>16</sup> Boden, pp. 19-20.

<sup>17</sup> Townsend, p. 19.

<sup>18</sup> Draft of Bishop George Frodsham's introduction to *Gloucestershire Friends: Poems from a German Prison Camp*, 10 July 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/36.

<sup>19</sup> Bishop Frodsham to Matilda Harvey, 12 July 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/41.

older boy takes Will's cap and throws it over a wall, and while Will is still stunned by this act the bully takes Eric's cap and does the same. The sight of Eric becoming the bully's target rouses Will to action:

Poetic justice being awake and observant sent to the aid of Willie seven insane devils who roused him from his trance and caused him suddenly and with violence to kick the tormenter's shin, and while he rubbed it to seize and take his cap to join the other two. The bell rang. A master came up. Vengeance was postponed.<sup>20</sup>

Whether the story is anecdotal or not does not matter. It tells us that Harvey recognised in himself a propensity for rage that could seize and control him like a man possessed, causing him to lash out in a frenzy – a quality that would both gain him distinction and cause him regret during the war.

By 1905, Harvey had finished his education and returned home, with no plan for his future.<sup>21</sup> According to his daughter, Eileen, his mother took him to see a phrenologist who examined his skull and pronounced that he should be a lawyer.<sup>22</sup> Eileen probably heard this story from Harvey himself, although he also offered a more likely explanation in his novel: 'Willie was good at English. He could express himself [...] What could [his parents] do but follow the school report?'<sup>23</sup> In the novel, the parents decide that the law is a fitting use for their son's education and ability with words, and he agrees 'that a passionate appeal for lost causes would be acceptable to his temperament. He thought (quite wrongly of course) that a solicitor's life would be concerned with such, rather than the prosaic transfer of property at profit'.<sup>24</sup> This hope that the law would be a struggle to aid the oppressed reflects his desire to find 'romance' in life by fighting for a just cause. On 21 July 1906, he was indentured for five years as a

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<sup>20</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', pp. 55-56, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>21</sup> Boden, p. 20; Townsend, p. 15.

<sup>22</sup> Boden, p. 20.

<sup>23</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', pp. 86-87, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

solicitor's clerk to Frank Treasure of Gloucester, to learn from experience and prepare for his law exams. Some guilt may have been felt by Harvey owing to the fact that his father paid a hefty sum of £200 for Treasure to take him, making him unwilling to abandon study of the law even as he realised that it was not for him.<sup>25</sup> Still, it was cheaper than studying law at a university. According to some accounts, the articles also required him to work no less than thirty miles from Gloucester after qualifying as a solicitor, until at least 1922.<sup>26</sup> This stipulation appears nowhere on the articles of indenture.<sup>27</sup> The idea of this prohibition may have been based on hearsay from those seeking an explanation for why Harvey practised away from Gloucester immediately before and after the war.

Harvey passed his intermediate examinations in 1908.<sup>28</sup> That same year he renewed an acquaintance from King's School days, one that would grow into perhaps the most important friendship of his life. This was with the musician – and soon-to-be poet – Ivor Gurney. Gurney was a student of Herbert Brewer, the organist of Gloucester Cathedral at the time.<sup>29</sup> Harvey and Gurney spent a great deal of time together at this stage of their lives, wandering the countryside and discussing music, poetry, and art, and sharing their love of nature. At about the same time, Harvey also became friends with the solicitor John 'Jack' Haines, probably through professional channels. Haines was a minor poet in his own right, who eventually developed a large literary network that was

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<sup>25</sup> Articles of Indenture between Frank Treasure (solicitor) and F.W. Harvey (clerk), 21 July 1906, GA, FWH, D12912/5/1.

<sup>26</sup> Boden, p. 263.

<sup>27</sup> Articles of Indenture, GA, FWH, D12912/5/1.

<sup>28</sup> The Law Society Intermediate Examination Certificate, 13 November 1908, GA, FWH, D12912/5/1.

<sup>29</sup> Boden, p. 22.

particularly associated with the Dymock Poets. Gurney and Harvey often visited Haines's Gloucester office purely to discuss art and literature.<sup>30</sup>

Harvey had always cultivated an interest in poetry and literature, as evidenced by his recitations at Rossall School and good performance in English classes. Yet he did not become fully aware of his desire to be a poet until around the time that he started his clerkship. There can be no doubt that his new friends aided this awakening. Not only did he begin two important friendships based on shared literary interests during this time, but his earliest known poem was written just after he renewed his acquaintance with Gurney, in 1909.<sup>31</sup> That same year he started writing down his favourite poems into a notebook, which he continued to update until 1914.<sup>32</sup> Creating this notebook was no small task: it contains roughly 160 poems (some are fragments only), by 70 named poets, along with a few by anonymous or unknown poets, as well as some verses from traditional songs. The poems are arranged roughly in alphabetical order by author, and span the history of English poetry from Chaucer through to contemporary poets such as Rudyard Kipling, Robert Bridges, and Walter de la Mare. They are not constrained by nationality, including English, Irish, Scottish, and American poets; nor by gender, with several female poets included. The poet most represented in the book is Lionel Johnson, with twelve individual poems copied out. A.E. Housman, the poet who would influence Harvey more than any other, is represented with three poems – roughly the average dedicated to any poet. Such a large and complex collection shows that poetry had become not just an interest for Harvey, but a passion.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>31</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'The Poems of Earth' (poem typescript), 1909, GA, FWH, D12912/3/1/7/1.

<sup>32</sup> Early notebook 1, 1909-1914, GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/Notebook 1.

Harvey alluded to this literary awakening with an unusual scene in his novel, presented as an extract from Will's diary, dated 12 September 1907. Will is studying a law book in the ruins of a structure near Gloucester built by 'black Dominicans', but now used as a cattle shed.<sup>33</sup> While doing so, he discovers a mysterious doorway in the floor that had been recently uncovered by rains. He enters the underground passageway behind it, and after some exploring finds that the door had shut itself and he is unable to open it. He knows that the ruins are seldom visited, and fears that he is now 'buried alive' – perhaps how he felt in real-life about his confinement in a career he disliked.<sup>34</sup> In a panic he crawls about in the darkness looking for an escape, chanting 'I must get out. I must get out [...] There must be some way out', and realising that just before entering the tunnel he had been reading "Snell's Equity", amused at the quaint and ancient phrase which described "donatio mortis causa" as the gift of one "apprehending his dissolution near".<sup>35</sup> This connection between the character's impending doom and his legal studies indicates the true source of troubles in the author's life. Will eventually discovers that the door had not shut itself; he had simply become lost in a side-tunnel. As he exits he has an epiphany:

Ten minutes (that was all it was) had shewn me what it was to live.

I had never known before.

I staggered up into a new world.

What did it all mean?

– The wind?

– The sniff of the fire?

– The bare architectural beauty of the elms?

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<sup>33</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 89, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 90.

It seemed that I was never less hysterical in my life. I was merely awake – for the first time.<sup>36</sup>

He then begins to cry and realises what a gift life is, and becomes hyper-aware of the countryside's beauty surrounding him.<sup>37</sup>

The story is certainly an invention, as no such ruins exist. They appear to be based loosely on Gloucester's Blackfriars priory, which has long been said to have tunnels connecting it to other medieval buildings. Harvey's fictional ruins seem to be located near Minsterworth, given the descriptions of farmland and the fact that one of the Harvey family's farmhands goes to inspect the ruins following the event.<sup>38</sup> This reflects Harvey's romantic vision of medieval Minsterworth's origins as a monastic farm, as he described in his wartime poem 'Song of Minsterworth'.<sup>39</sup> The story of the character losing himself in a side tunnel is symbolic of Harvey's legal career distracting him from his calling as a poet. Finding his way back, the character discovers his true purpose. As he emerges into the light, his prose even begins to resemble a rough draft of a poem, with brief statements and rhetorical questions that suggest line breaks.

The novel continues with Will's journal entry for the following day. It is his mother's birthday, and he gives her Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*. He writes that the previous day's events caused him to find significance in Whitman's 'Beginning my studies', citing the lines 'Beginning my studies, the first step pleased me so; – / The mere fact of consciousness, these forms, the power of motion, ... I have hardly gone, and hardly wished to go further'.<sup>40</sup> These lines

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 91.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 93.

<sup>39</sup> F.W. Harvey, *A Gloucestershire Lad at Home and Abroad* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd., 1916), pp. 11-12.

<sup>40</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 93, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1. There are several errors in Harvey's quotation from Whitman's poem, he was perhaps writing it from memory rather than copying directly from a book.

certainly reflect his rebirth in the tunnel, though he omits the final line: 'But stop and loiter all the time to sing it in ecstatic songs'.<sup>41</sup> The reason for that line's omission can be found in the beginning of the novel's next chapter:

Such was the beginning of Willie's consciousness of vocation, real, though undefined in expression.

He knew, in short, what he was to do, without knowing how he was to do it.

Will wanted to express his new *joie de vivre*, but did not know how he would do so, or that it would be poetry that would lead him to 'sing it in ecstatic songs'. Harvey wrote that his character, Will, felt a growing 'determination to produce art which will embody his now clear perception of the divine in common existence, lived as it should be – that is naturally'.<sup>42</sup> Soon thereafter, Will finally realises that he wants to be a poet, a revelation brought to him during – and because of – a hiking trip through the Gloucestershire countryside with Eric.<sup>43</sup>

Will and Eric's hike through the countryside is taken to cope with the death of their father. In reality, their father died on 5 December 1909, an event which affected Harvey's mental health. Shortly thereafter, Matilda sent the two brothers on a tour of Switzerland and Italy, probably to help them recover from their bereavement.<sup>44</sup> In 1911, Harvey sat – and failed – his final law examinations. He was then enrolled in a crammer course in the law school at Lincoln's Inn in London. He may have hated to leave Gloucestershire, but he surely found comfort in the fact that he would be reunited with Gurney, who had left for London earlier that year to study at the Royal College of Music.<sup>45</sup> The two saw each other when they could, evidenced by a letter that Gurney wrote at

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<sup>41</sup> Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*, 1891-92 edition (London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1897), p. 14.

<sup>42</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 94, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

<sup>44</sup> Boden, p. 30.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.



this time during a visit to Gloucestershire, asking Harvey to meet and see a play with him on Gurney's return to London the next day.<sup>46</sup>

Harvey may have re-dedicated himself to the law in London, but his heart was still yearning to observe the world and write of what he saw. In a letter to his mother during his studies he stated: 'After a few hours blindness in law it is a fact that the street door becomes a drop-curtain. On opening it, you experience the excitement of the theatre-goer'.<sup>47</sup> In the letter he describes many of the interesting things that he sees during his breaks from study. Yet he closes the letter with 'Do not pity me. I create worlds of my own. But the already created world of the Law now claims me so Goodbye!'<sup>48</sup> He was escaping to his imagination in order to ignore life's actuality. Harvey was aware that others saw him as a dreamer who was not fully present in reality. In his novel, Will's mother articulates concerns over his lack of grounding. As Will begins his legal career, she tells Eric that she 'remember[ed] a quaint little trick of Willie's when he was a baby [...] He had a habit of shutting his eyes, and simply blotting out the world when he did not like it'.<sup>49</sup> She claims that this was detrimental to his well-being, as life was 'to be endured, not ignored'.<sup>50</sup> Harvey had probably heard this from her in real life; he was certainly aware that others perceived this weakness in him. In his wartime poetic self-portrait, he would proclaim his preference for the world in his mind over that of reality:

Of Life, he craves not much, except to watch,  
Being forced to act,  
He walks behind himself, as if to catch  
The motive: – An accessory to the fact  
Faintly amused it seems,

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<sup>46</sup> Ivor Gurney to F.W. Harvey, [1911], GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/8.

<sup>47</sup> F.W. Harvey to Matilda Harvey, [1911-1912], GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/3.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 129, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

Behind his dreams.<sup>51</sup>

That he was often not fully present in reality is hinted at by his 'walking behind himself'. The self-assessment is not completely honest – Harvey did not always have to be 'forced to act' if the action required was something that caught his interest. The law was not interesting to him, but poetry and soldiering would be. If he was bored then he would escape to his imagination. His absent-mindedness and daydreaming often affected his life in the physical world: returning to London after a visit, he forgot his spectacles and therefore had difficulty studying, and after a different visit he left his bag on the train.<sup>52</sup> Harvey's tendency to block out the world may have caused him difficulties at some times in his life, but years later the ability to escape in his mind from the confinement of POW camps may have been exactly what he needed to maintain some sanity.

Although Harvey was in London to concentrate on the law following the embarrassing failure of his exams, he could not contain his desire to write. He was still experimenting with literary forms; at this time it was not poetry, but prose, that he was working to develop. In a letter to Eric of 7 October 1911 he stated that he had given up writing essays as his 'development has all along been towards the novel'.<sup>53</sup> He claimed that inspiration had finally struck him when he was at a pub with a friend called Sonny. A woman had passed by their table, giving Sonny a slight nod. Sonny informed Harvey that she was a 'German girl of fairly good birth', but owing to circumstances she had become a prostitute.<sup>54</sup> His friend added that she was still 'perfectly honest' and that 'in

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<sup>51</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 50.

<sup>52</sup> F.W. Harvey to Matilda Harvey, [1911-1912], GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/4; F.W. Harvey to Matilda Harvey, [1911-1912], GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/5.

<sup>53</sup> F.W. Harvey to [Eric Harvey], 7 October 1911, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/13.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

spite of her profession she still preserved a pure mind'.<sup>55</sup> Harvey used the next six handwritten pages of his letter to outline to Eric his proposal for a novel based on her story, even going so far as to draft out some dialogue. In his tale, she falls in love with a lad from a good middle-class family, but eventually they are torn apart by the machinations of a deranged clergyman who does not approve of their engagement and eventually resorts to murdering her.<sup>56</sup> There is no evidence that Harvey ever pursued this tale further. However, it demonstrates that he had begun to contemplate a novel based on real-life characters ten or more years before writing 'Will Harvey – A Romance'. This apparent fascination with what were then known as 'fallen women' may also have provided nascent inspiration for the adulterous character, Mrs Bransbury-Stuart, in his novel.

One reason for not attempting to develop the story at this point may have been Harvey's discovery that he could express himself better through poetry. A scene set at around 1911 in 'Will Harvey – A Romance' is telling of his development at this stage. Will declares his intention to be a poet, at which Eric asks him why he prefers poetry to prose:

'I have tried prose', he answered, 'but my thoughts always run into verse: – not that I meant it to', he reflected. (A good reply!) 'For somehow', he went on, 'the building up of a poem (and every poem is built: – constructed upon the original bit of inspiration supplied free), somehow this building takes the original meaning which is our (quickly forgotten) sight of God's gift, and makes it better than it was.'<sup>57</sup>

Harvey felt that his development towards poetry was inevitable, stemming from an innate need and talent within him. It may be that 1911 was the year that he came to this realisation.

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 114, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

It was during his time in London that Harvey discovered – or at least discovered that he identified with – the poems of A.E. Housman’s *A Shropshire Lad*. This work would influence his poetry more than any other. In the Harvey scrapbook deposited in the Gloucestershire Archives by Cyril Hart, a collection of pages cut from a pocket notebook has the overarching title ‘My Theory of Art (1911) London’.<sup>58</sup> A note on one of these pages states ‘Shropshire Lad. “In valleys of springs + rivers”’.<sup>59</sup> This is a reference to *A Shropshire Lad* L (‘In valleys of springs and rivers’), which sees the speaker living in London but dreaming of his distant home in Shropshire. The speaker believes that his homeland was ‘the country for easy livers / The quietest under the sun’.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, he realises that even in his idyllic homeland the people ‘had sorrows to lighten / One could not always be glad’ – yet he adds that

In London, the town built ill  
'Tis sure small matter for wonder  
If sorrow is with one still.<sup>61</sup>

Harvey must have similarly felt that in Gloucestershire he would still have problems, but at least there he had the respite of the countryside. Ivor Gurney, too, saw London through the eyes of Housman’s *Shropshire Lad*. While home on a visit, Gurney wrote to Harvey’s London address. He was preparing to return to London in a few days, but felt that he had been refreshed by an invigorating sailing trip on the Severn. He highlights his newfound energy by quoting Housman, claiming that now ‘Not even London, “the town built ill”, can distress me much’.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Scrapbook of F.W. Harvey, GA, CEH, D3921.II.38.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> A.E. Housman, *A Shropshire Lad* (London: Grant Richards, 1903), p. 76.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Gurney to Harvey [1911], GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/8.

Further pages are pasted next to Harvey's *A Shropshire Lad* notes, and speak of London with such exclamations as 'How horrible life was!'<sup>63</sup> Another note states, somewhere between poetry and prose:

London  
- - -  
The extraordinary thing that  
happens in it  
The lives it hides – God.<sup>64</sup>

Harvey believed that London reduced the individual to little more than an anonymous denizen of a faceless city, hiding lives that could be 'extraordinary'. Like Housman's *Shropshire Lad*, he felt that that the city itself made one lonely and miserable.

Harvey also pasted the first page of the table of contents from *A Shropshire Lad* into his scrapbook. He underlined the titles of eight of the fifteen poems listed there, presumably representing his favourites (II, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, X, XIV, XV). Atop the page he made a note: 'All this is truly and intensely spiritual tho' unhappy.'<sup>65</sup> He dates this statement 1900, perhaps the date of publication of his edition of *A Shropshire Lad*, as it is not likely that he was writing about deep readings of Housman at age 11-12. Under this he wrote 'It is not [illegible] or social injustice the *Shropshire lad* feels dreadful'.<sup>66</sup> Harvey believed that the melancholic tone of many of the poems in the collection was nothing other than the speaker feeling 'dreadful' – or depressed, much as Harvey was. He added some notes next to the contents page when he pasted it into the scrapbook, most of which are small parodies of verse from *A Shropshire Lad*. The first parody demonstrates where he thought Housman's poetry could improve: 'What sunshine there is is thin wintry stuff debunked of its

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<sup>63</sup> Scrapbook of F.W. Harvey, GA, CEH, D3921.II.38.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

Summer [sic] strength'. This echoes *A Shropshire Lad* LXII ('Terence, this is stupid stuff'), which is Housman's own critique of his collection's poems.<sup>67</sup> While Harvey admired the collection, his claim that its 'sunshine' was 'thin wintry stuff' that failed to reach its full potential implies that Housman's more cheerful work did not rival the quality of his sombre verse. Harvey would attempt to counter this in his own poetry, often writing in a style clearly inspired by Housman's, but considerably lighter.

Another of Harvey's notes is a clear parody of *A Shropshire Lad* II ('Loveliest of trees, the cherry now'). Housman's poem states 'Now, of my threescore years and ten, / Twenty will not come again', and then expresses the speaker's need to spend the rest of his years 'look[ing] at things in bloom'.<sup>68</sup> Harvey's imitation reads 'Brains last but three score years and ten but loins –', either jesting or asserting that Housman's poem does not lament loss of mental power, but of sexual ability.<sup>69</sup> A final note here again indicates Harvey's time in London: 'God! The match seller in Leicester Square'.<sup>70</sup> This is a memory of the poverty of London, an example of the misery in the city that upset him just as it did the speaker of many *A Shropshire Lad* poems. These notes taken as a whole make clear that Harvey associated Housman's poetry with his life in London.

Regardless of the misery and homesickness that Harvey felt in London, he muddled through his studies and passed his final examination by 5 July 1912, and by 20 December he was accepted into the Law Society as a fully-qualified solicitor of the Supreme Court.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Housman, pp. 91-94.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>69</sup> Scrapbook of F.W. Harvey, GA, CEH, D3921.II.38.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> The Law Society Final Examination Certificate, 5 July 1912, GA, FWH, D12912/5/1; Certificate of Qualification as a Solicitor of the Supreme Court, 18 December 1912, GA, FWH,

At this time Harvey began to write poetry seriously, and attempted to find publication, but with no real success. The only slight encouragement he received was the acceptance by Gloucester's local newspaper, *The Citizen*, of an elegy titled 'A Spring Day (To A.J.S.)', which was published on 15 February 1912.<sup>72</sup> The identity of A.J.S. is not known, but notes in one of Harvey's scrapbooks where he pasted the article state that he was only a 'boy'.<sup>73</sup>

Harvey's own notes on the poem were particularly critical of it:

Here is the theme – brutally strong – as it struck me. The Live Spring and The Dead boy. That was poetry: now it is more eanimic [sic – anaemic] verse. Its strong vitality is impoverished by too many ideas (included if you please to soothe his relations' theology!) It was the boy I thought of. He is dead. But there! One must be kind to those who lived – poor things!<sup>74</sup>

This was not the statement of someone looking back on the poem years later; it seems to have been written shortly after publication. The note is dated '1912' in the margin, and the handwriting quality and style of ink used are consistent with other notes in the scrapbook that certainly come from that year. This provides important evidence that Harvey was finding his own poetic voice, realising that the strength of his verse would be found in economy of language and ideas.

Despite distancing himself from the poem in his notes, Harvey published it twice more with minimal changes. He reused it in the February 1916 issue of the 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, and then had it reprinted in *A Gloucestershire Lad*.<sup>75</sup> Stranger still is the fact that he recycled it as an elegy for a different person, slightly changing the title to 'The First Spring Day', and re-dedicating it in 1916 'To A.E.S.'.<sup>76</sup> This was Private A.E. Sampson, killed at the front in November

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D12912/5/1; Gibson and Weldon to F.W. Harvey, with attached payment receipts for final examination and admission into the Law Society, 20 December 1912, GA, FWH, D12912/5/1.

<sup>72</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'A Spring Day (To. A.J.S.)', *The Citizen*, 15 February 1912.

<sup>73</sup> F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'E', 1911-[1956], GA, FWH, D12912/6/3, fol. 94.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'The First Spring Day (To A.E.S.)', 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, February 1916, TJUM; Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, pp. 43-44.

<sup>76</sup> Harvey, 'First Spring Day', TJUM.

1915, making the topic of death in spring seem conspicuously out of place.<sup>77</sup>

The title's allusion to the first day of spring probably has in mind Candlemas (2 February), considering that the poem was published in February in both the *Citizen* and the *Gazette*. However, the poem also states that

We laid you fast in frozen clay  
When Winter had enchained the land.  
(Lad was it but three weeks to-day?).<sup>78</sup>

This may have worked for the original 'A.J.S.', but not so much in the case of A.E. Sampson, who was killed closer to thirteen weeks before Candlemas. Harvey made only one change for the 1916 version: the first lines of stanza seven in the original read 'Oh you must set your ears to earth, / To list the growing of the flowers'; the revised version reads 'For you have set your ears to earth, / To list the growing of the flowers'.<sup>79</sup> Perhaps in the case of 'A.J.S.' – who was only a boy – Harvey was comfortable telling the deceased what he 'must' do with his time in the grave, but not so much for a man who had experienced life and death in the trenches.

It has been thought that many of Harvey's wartime poems – including those in the 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette* and in his collections – were written before the war. Until now, scholars could only theorise on which ones these were, but thanks to the Harvey Collection we have documented evidence that at least nine poems published during the war were indeed written (or at least drafted to some degree) earlier. We can better understand Harvey's development as a poet by knowing which poems are his earliest, and examining to what extent he later edited, used, and reused them. Dated manuscripts and typescripts show that in 1909 he wrote what later became 'Poetry', while in 1913 he wrote poems

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<sup>77</sup> 'Casualties', 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, December 1915, TJUM.

<sup>78</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 43.

<sup>79</sup> Harvey, 'A Spring Day (To. A.J.S.)'; Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 44.



later published as 'Foreboding', 'Death – The Revealer', 'Triolet (If beauty were a mortal thing)', 'Song of the Road', 'A Christmas Wish', and 'On Over Bridge at Evening'; while another manuscript contains a draft poem that would provide the basis for both 'Gloucestershire – From Abroad' and 'Cricket – The Catch'. In addition to these, an entry by Harvey in a scrapbook states that '[“]The Return[”] was written 1/1/14', referring to the poem of that title also published during the war.<sup>80</sup> This note is in the scrapbook that was available to previous researchers, yet none seems to have noticed it – understandable given that it is placed alone and sideways on a seemingly-random page corner.

Some of the pre-war poems found in Harvey's archives were heavily edited before publishing. His 'Cricket Song' would eventually evolve into two poems: 'Cricket – the Catch', first published in the 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*; and 'Gloucestershire – From Abroad', published in his 1919 collection *Ducks*. The manuscript poem itself is not dated, but is on the reverse side of a page of ruled paper containing 'At Evening' (dated 1913). 'Cricket Song' is also numbered '30' in one corner, matching the formatting of Harvey's other surviving 1913 manuscripts that are similarly numbered. The poem probably carried on to a second, now-missing page, as the second stanza is much shorter than the first. Having never been published before, 'Cricket Song' is worth quoting in full here:

1./ On Dinny Hill the daffodil  
 Has Crowned the years returning  
 And waters cool in Plackett Pool  
 While Summer sun is burning  
 But not in stream we'll splash or dream  
 Within the woods [sic] green thicket  
 For tis' [sic] the day we keep for play  
 At Cricket, Cricket, Cricket.

Chorus. So come my lads bring out the pads  
 The ball & bat & wicket  
 This is the day when we will play

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<sup>80</sup> Scrapbook of F.W. Harvey, GA, CEH, D3921.II.38; F.W. Harvey, 'A Gloucestershire Lad', 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, March 1916, GA, FWH, D12912/8/1; Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 28.

At Cricket, Cricket, Cricket!

II./ The Blue Birds' [sic] dead, I fear, or fled  
 Where we can never follow  
 But through the slips there skims and dips  
 Today a scarlet swallow.<sup>81</sup>

The poem awkwardly attempts to combine too many ideas. The pastoral in the first stanza does not fit well with the folk-song like chorus, while the shift to the sombre tone of the final stanza's dead bluebird-of-the-past is too jarring.

Whether Harvey was informed of the poem's shortcomings by publishers or saw them himself is not known. However, it is copied out in fine hand, indicating that Harvey considered it a final draft, as his drafts usually tended to be nearly illegible until his final one.

Fortunately, he later separated the first stanza and the second to make two distinct poems, which more fully developed their respective tone and themes. The first of these poems to be published was 'Cricket (The Catch)' in the August 1915 issue of the 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, and again in *A Gloucestershire Lad*. It begins:

Whizzing, fierce, it came  
 Down in the summer air,  
 Burning like a flame  
 On my fingers bare,  
 And it brought to me  
 As Swift – a memory.

Happy days long dead  
 Clear I saw once more.  
 Childhood that is fled: –  
 Rossall on the shore,  
 Where the sea sobs wild  
 Like a homesick child.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'At Evening' and 'Cricket Song' (poem manuscript), GA, FWH, D12912/3/1/13/5.

<sup>82</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 13.

Its final stanza borrows directly from the final stanza of 'Cricket Song', although there are slight but important differences between the two published versions of that stanza as seen here:

*5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, 1915:

O the blue bird's fled,  
Never man can follow.  
Yet at times instead  
Flies this scarlet swallow:  
And upon its wings  
Sweet time-strangled things.<sup>83</sup>

*A Gloucestershire Lad*, 1916:

Oh, the blue bird's fled!  
Never man can follow.  
Yet at times instead  
Comes this scarlet swallow,  
Bearing on its wings  
(Where it skims and dips,  
Gleaming through the slips)  
Sweet Time-strangled things.<sup>84</sup>

The most obvious change between publications is the addition in the 1916 version of '(Where it skims and dips, / Gleaming through the slips)', which reflects 'But through the slips there skims and dips' from 'Cricket Song'. 'Cricket – the Catch' was certainly penned by Harvey just behind the trenches in 1915. He probably recalled his earlier lines from 'Cricket Song' and wanted to use them to better effect in a new poem, but working only from memory he did not remember to include the imagery likening the red cricket ball to a red swallow flying between the slip fielders. Once he returned to Gloucestershire in late 1915 he had access to his pre-war poems, and could refer to them while preparing his manuscript for *A Gloucestershire Lad*. He probably decided to add those lines to the poem after referring to his original draft of 'Cricket Song'.

'Cricket (The Catch)' shows that Harvey had matured significantly as a poet over the previous years. Just as his notes regarding 'too many ideas' in the 1912 'A Spring Day' demonstrate, he was learning that his short poems should concentrate on a minimum of themes for clarity and effectiveness. By clearing away the initial pastoral ode and the peculiar chorus, and then expanding on the

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<sup>83</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Out of the Trenches', *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, August 1915, GA, FWH, D12912/8/1/1.

<sup>84</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 13.

memories of the past that a cricket game brought rushing to his mind, he created a poem that demonstrated how inexorably cricket was linked to childhood memories.

Harvey was able to salvage the opening lines of 'Cricket Song' as well. They appeared in 'Gloucestershire – From Abroad', which was published in *Ducks* alongside his later POW poems. It begins by using the first stanza of 'Cricket Song' nearly verbatim, before continuing with a description of the flowering trees reflecting in the water of Placket Pool (a section of the Severn at Minsterworth):

On Dinny Hill the daffodil  
Has crowed the years returning.  
The water cool in Placket Pool  
Is ruffled up and burning  
In little wings of fluttering fire.  
And all the heart of my desire  
Is now to be in Gloucestershire.<sup>85</sup>

Harvey probably wrote 'Gloucestershire – From Abroad' in a POW camp: had he written it earlier, then he would have included it in *A Gloucestershire Lad*. He recalled the lines from 'Cricket Song' out of memory, much as he did with those lines used in 'Cricket – the Catch'. No manuscript of the poem survives, but it is listed as 'From Abroad' in the proposed contents page for the manuscript of what became *Ducks*.<sup>86</sup> The poem uses an image ('The river flows, the blossom blows') that echoes a line in Harvey's 1916 poem 'Song of Minsterworth' ('While blossom blows and Severn Flows'), from *A Gloucestershire Lad*.

'Gloucestershire – From Abroad' proclaims a yearning for home that Harvey would have felt as a POW, and the rhyming of 'fire' and 'desire' with

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<sup>85</sup> F.W. Harvey, *Ducks, and Other Verses* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd., 1919), p. 17.

<sup>86</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'A New England' (author's manuscript), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 3.

'Gloucestershire' works much better when spoken in a Gloucestershire accent, as Harvey was attempting to recreate the sounds of home that he missed.

Most of the pre-war poems found in the archive were published later with very minimal changes, if any. In Harvey's novel, Will claims that he is reusing many of his pre-war poems for publication during the war:

'And how is the regimental paper going on?' asked his mother. 'I meet many old friends in it – poems of yours written long ago.'

'Yes, I have had to use them up when topical matters ran short. They are often more suitable, since they deal with things which soldiers think of more often than they think of war – the country; the things they loved in peace; all that they are fighting for.'<sup>87</sup>

He later adds that many of these pre-war poems were also to be published in his own collection by a prestigious publisher.<sup>88</sup>

'Poetry' was one of these pre-war poems that was published in wartime with no changes other than its title. Originally 'The Poems of Earth', it is dated 1909, making it the earliest of Harvey's published poems. The typescript of this poem was probably made on 5 January 1914, when Harvey hired a typist, Miss Girdlestone, to create typescripts of his essays and poems from his manuscripts; the typescript of 'Poetry' also matches the formatting of three other typed poems that are dated 1913.<sup>89</sup> The typescripts were doubtless made for submission to publishers, and 'Poetry' is very likely to be one of the poems that Harvey would later claim was praised in wartime by those who had formerly rejected them before he became famous. The version published in the December 1915 issue of the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette* varies slightly from the typescript, but the version published in *A Gloucestershire Lad* in 1916 is identical to the 1909 version. This shows that as early as 1909, Harvey was

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<sup>87</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 205, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 206.

<sup>89</sup> Bill from Ms Girdlestone of London for typing of essays and verses, 5 January 1914, GA, FWH, D12912/4/1/2.

capable of writing publishable poetry. 'Poetry' is not a great poem to build a collection around, but it is good enough to round out a collection. The first stanza is representative, showing Harvey's desire to find poetry in everyday life, and to show love of nature through poetry:

The poems of Earth are lived  
Not scratched with the dirty pen,  
They are writ in the sense of things  
And sung in the hearts of men.<sup>90</sup>

The influence of Housman is apparent as early as 1909: the ballad stanza, simple vocabulary, and sparse use of adjectives.

Harvey's 'Song of the Road' shows only one, very minor change from its 1913 typescript to its 1916 printing in *A Gloucestershire Lad*: the replacing of 'everyone' with 'every one'.<sup>91</sup> It looks solidly like a wartime poem, as it evokes images of soldiers on route-march with such lines as

Cheerily upon the road  
Tramp we all together  
Bearing every one his load  
[...]  
We must bravely tread the way,  
Gaily sing together.<sup>92</sup>

Yet the typescript shows that it pre-dated the war by at least a year. The militaristic imagery – a group moving resolutely down the road carrying heavy loads – signals that Harvey idealised some aspects of military life well before the prospect of going to war became a reality. In fact, the very images that he used came from a newspaper article pasted in a scrapbook that he created in 1909. The article was a description of yearly Territorial Force training, and contains the following report, underlined by Harvey and later echoed in his

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<sup>90</sup> Harvey, 'The Poems of Earth', GA, FWH, D12912/3/1/7/1.

<sup>91</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Song of the Road' (poem typescript), 1913, GA, FWH, D12912/3/1/7/2; Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 7.

<sup>92</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 7.

poem: 'We scrambled and fired and struggled in the heather and the pine woods; we tramped scorching miles on dusty roads with empty water bottles'.<sup>93</sup> The use of tramped/tramp particularly ties the two together. Harvey highlighted several more sections of the article, which surely spoke to him and his doubts about his legal career: 'The tired body moves and the mind rests. Problems and difficulties and doubts cease to exist [Harvey's underlining].'<sup>94</sup> Harvey was pondering the advantages of the soldier's life over his professional life. Above the final column of the article he simply wrote the word 'Romance'.<sup>95</sup> He would later define romance as being 'wherever men fight the immemorial battle of their fathers and sons. It is there whatever be the results of the battle. It feeds not on achievement, but on hope'.<sup>96</sup> Harvey was not finding the law to be a career which gave him hope in the age-old struggle for the advancement of man, but perhaps soldiering could be. This poem was not the result of the war, but instead the result of Harvey's pre-war idealisation of soldiering and his exploration of the need for 'Romance' – which meant men working together as comrades in a common cause. The martial imagery simply made it a perfect candidate for inclusion with his war poems in *A Gloucestershire Lad*.

'Death the Revealer' is another of Harvey's pre-war poems that falsely seems like a wartime one.<sup>97</sup> The speaker states that life forces him to view the world only through the constraints of 'this dim five-windowed house of sense' which distorts his view of reality like 'coloured glass'.<sup>98</sup> He will only be released

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<sup>93</sup> A Territorial Officer, 'Our Holiday in Khaki', unknown publication, [1909], found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'C', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1, fols. 58-59.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 59.

<sup>95</sup> F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'C', 1909, GA, FWH, D12912/6/1, fol. 59.

<sup>96</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 122, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>97</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Death' (poem manuscript), 1913, GA, FWH, D12912/3/1/7/3; F.W. Harvey, 'Death – The Revealer', *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, May 1916, TJUM; Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 49.

<sup>98</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 49.

into 'the great winds of the outer world' once 'God has turned the key', unlocking death as the title suggests.<sup>99</sup> The poem was first published in 1916, but Harvey's 1913 typescript – titled only 'Death' – shows that this was not the work of an idealistic soldier-poet who is trying to come to terms with death, but rather the words of a young solicitor suffering from depression because he feels that his life is unfulfilling.<sup>100</sup>

The depressing, fatalistic nature of the poem was a reflection of Harvey's life. By mid-1913 he was established in the practice of John Middleton of Chesterfield. In Harvey's 'Scrapbook G', he kept newspaper articles detailing his court appearances. These show that Middleton was assigning Harvey to work on cases relating to National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.<sup>101</sup> Prosecuting negligent parents may sound like a noble cause, but it was also depressing, and opened Harvey's eyes to social injustice. Chesterfield was an industrial and mining town where many of the lowest-paid members of the working class lived in squalor. If rearing children became financially impossible, parents had few choices. One option was to send them to the workhouse rather than keep them; that would be a difficult thing for all but the most callous of parents. As one typical example from an article in Harvey's scrapbook shows, following his successful prosecution of parents, the children – all under age fourteen – were taken to a life in the workhouse.<sup>102</sup> The workhouse may have been better than sleeping on a concrete floor in a slum, as these children had been, but it was hardly a good life.<sup>103</sup> Harvey was a sensitive man, and his middle-class upbringing in a large house in the beautiful

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Harvey, 'Death', GA, FWH, D12912/3/1/7/3.

<sup>101</sup> F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'G', 1912-[1956], GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/5, passim.

<sup>102</sup> 'Concrete Floor for a Bed. Shocking Neglect at Unstone Green.', *Derbyshire Times*, [1913], found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'G', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/5, fol. 3.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.



Gloucestershire countryside did not prepare him for the harsh effects of industrialisation. Living in a squalid, industrial area, and being an active agent in breaking up families forced into dire straits by the machinations of industry – and by the bane of ignorance and alcoholism so prevalent amongst poverty-stricken people – certainly had a negative effect on his mental health. This period of depression had a lasting impact on him.

In Harvey's novel, the character Will finds himself in similar circumstances. He is a lawyer in the fictional town of Eccleton, described as 'just another of those black and accursed towns glorified by Arnold Bennett. Its extreme ugliness was excelled only by its absurd sense of civic importance'.<sup>104</sup> In actuality, some of Harvey's work in Chesterfield took place in the nearby town of Eckington, which he only thinly disguised in the novel. In one scene the character is sent to deliver a court summons for money owed to a client of his firm. Arriving at the appointed address, he finds 'a dazed, anaemic looking woman in the midst of five small filthily dirty children'.<sup>105</sup> Will is filled with 'rage at the universe', and decides to pay the £9 for them, not out of charity but simply to get out of the situation and because of his 'sheer disgust at the root of it'.<sup>106</sup> In return he receives only indignation from his employer and client, and no thanks from his beneficiaries – who, he feels, have been too dehumanized by poverty to know gratitude.<sup>107</sup>

Will soon becomes so depressed that he attempts suicide, but botches it, which leads to him beginning an affair with Mrs Bransbury-Stuart, the seductive wife of an industrialist.<sup>108</sup> For Harvey, writing after the war, she represented his

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<sup>104</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 131, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 133.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136.

perception of industrial England: unfaithfully using men for her own advantage, then casting them aside when she is done with them. The character's affair with her may symbolise the real Harvey's own shame in becoming involved with what he saw as a socially-unjust system. There is no record that Harvey ever attempted suicide in reality. However, he did state in his prison-camp lecture 'Are Poets Any Use?' that in this period of his life, which he called his 'period of paganism', he 'had become unhappy to the verge of suicide'.<sup>109</sup> The suicide attempt in the novel is certainly fiction, given the implausibility of how it occurs: the character binds his own hands and then throws himself into a river in the middle of the night, only to be pulled out by Mrs Bransbury-Stuart – who must be able either to undress very quickly to swim in after him, or to be capable of managing a swift-moving river in an Edwardian-era dress while hauling a helpless man.<sup>110</sup>

Harvey was certainly depressed at this point, a fact that might explain why he would write a poem like 'Death the Revealer', that showed death as an improvement over life. Suicide is not implied in the poem: there it is God, not oneself, who must '[turn] the key' to unlock the afterlife.<sup>111</sup> Still, the poem is fatalistic, and this reflected Harvey's pre-war depression. Such fatalism was easily applied to the life of a soldier at war, hence Harvey was able to reuse the poem for later circumstances.

He even began to write poetry lamenting the loss of his youth, even though he was only twenty-five by 1913. In this year he wrote the poem that would be published with only minor punctuation changes in the May 1916 issue

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<sup>109</sup> F.W. Harvey's POW-camp lectures notebook, 1916-1917, GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 1.

<sup>110</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 138, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>111</sup> Harvey, 'Death', GA, FWH, D12912/3/1/7/3.

of the 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, and again in *Ducks*, as 'Foreboding'.<sup>112</sup> This begins with the statement 'The year grows lean', indicating the beginning of winter, which is followed by the speaker observing a slender figure stoking 'the fire / Of Old Desire'.<sup>113</sup> The figure then fades away; as it does so the speaker hears it proclaim 'My-name-was-Youth'.<sup>114</sup> As with 'Song of the Road', this poem seems to fit its publication date better than its date of composition. The publication of this poem in 1916 by a twenty-eight-year-old Harvey, who had seen youth consumed by war, makes more sense than its creation by a twenty-five-year-old lawyer with his whole life ahead of him. Its revival in 1919 alongside the POW poems in *Ducks* is even more fitting: thirty-one-year-old Harvey was forced to watch his own youth disappear from inside the confines of a prison camp. Yet the poem was actually Harvey's lament that he had lost the carefree days of childhood, and was now damned like the spectre of youth in his poem to fade away into the adult world of a passionless vocation away from family, friends, and the countryside.

Still, not all was bleak for Harvey at this time. In mid-1913, doctors decided that his depression was caused by a swollen gland on his neck that he had endured for years. He received surgery to remove the gland at Gloucester Royal Infirmary, where it is believed that he met his future wife, Sarah 'Anne' Kane. Anne was an Irish nurse, whom Harvey found much in common with.<sup>115</sup> It is not certain when they became engaged, but she was undoubtedly an important part of his life from this point on: correspondence shows that she frequently visited The Redlands during Harvey's wartime absence. Still, despite

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<sup>112</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'The Year Grows Lean' (poem manuscript), 1913, GA, FWH, D12912/3/1/13/61; F.W. Harvey, 'Sickness and Health', 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, May 1916, TJUM; Harvey, *Ducks*, p. 67.

<sup>113</sup> Harvey, 'The Year Grows Lean', GA, FWH, D12912/3/1/13/61.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> Boden, pp. 39-42.

this newfound romance and treatment of his glandular condition, Harvey remained largely morose through late 1913 to early 1914.

He continued musing on death, lost youth, and yearning for home with his writing of 'The Return' on 1 January 1914. The date indicates that he wrote this poem when he was away practising law in Derbyshire. The poem was first published in the 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette* in March 1916, and was used by Boden as evidence that Harvey was contemplating his own death on the battlefield as rumours mounted prior to the Somme offensive.<sup>116</sup> As shall be seen, Harvey was nowhere near the front at this time, nor had he been for nearly six months, a fact of which Boden was unaware. The poem certainly seems like the sort that a soldier in combat, far away from home, might write:

The unimaginable hour  
 That folds away our joys and pain  
 Holds not the spirit in its power.  
 Therefore I shall come home again  
 (Wherever my poor body lies),  
 To whisper in the summer trees  
 Upon a lazy fall and rise  
 Of wind: and in day's red decline  
 Walk with the sun those roads of mine,  
 Then rosy with my memories.

Though you may see me not, yet hear  
 My laughter in the laughing streams,  
 My footsteps in the running rain...  
 For the sake of all I counted dear  
 And visit still within my dreams  
 I shall at last come home again.<sup>117</sup>

When published in the *Gazette*, it was placed under the heading 'A Gloucestershire Lad', a clear nod to Housman's *A Shropshire Lad*.<sup>118</sup> Harvey's speaker states that no matter where his 'poor body lies', the reader will still hear 'My laughter in the laughing streams, / My footsteps in the running rain' near his

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid., pp. 109-12.

<sup>117</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 28.

<sup>118</sup> Harvey, 'A Gloucestershire Lad', GA, FWH, D12912/8/1/1.

home.<sup>119</sup> This echoes Housman's *A Shropshire Lad* LII ('Far in a western brookland'), in which the speaker states 'Here I lie down in London', while in Shropshire

There, by starlit fences,  
The wanderer halts and hears  
My soul that lingers sighing  
About the glimmering weirs.<sup>120</sup>

The key difference is that Housman's speaker only lies down to sleep in London, while his soul remains in Shropshire; Harvey's speaker, on the other hand, sees his soul returning home only after his body is dead. This may be a dark thought for a young solicitor, but it is in keeping with the theme of death as a form of release and freedom as seen in 'Death the Revealer'. Harvey probably decided to revive 'The Return' during the war because the idea of a young man's spirit returning to his home would be a comfort to the bereaved, and would harken to his strongly-held belief that the English home was worth dying for. He may have revised it before publishing, but with no pre-war draft to review we cannot be sure. Still, Harvey himself tells us through the date in his notebook that this was a poem born not of war, but instead born of a young man's frustrations and dissatisfaction with life.

It seems that his visits to Gloucestershire provided his only happiness at this time. On 2 March 1914, Harvey wrote a letter to Gurney during a break from work in his office (the letter was on a scrap torn from a Derbyshire roll of electors) stating that he would visit Gloucestershire over Easter and would

be able to write again[:] Health good. People kind. Country the most romantic I have seen – for it is Glos: the romance (a more subtil [sic] and exquisite sort) is less in the country itself, than in the clustered little villages whose windows shine better than stars through the dark orchards

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<sup>119</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 28.

<sup>120</sup> Housman, p. 80.

that dead men have made and cared for. Oh, when shall I see an apple blossom?<sup>121</sup>

Harvey's family had also become aware of his distressed mental state. His mother wrote to him on 4 April, anticipating his Easter return. He must have informed her of his misgivings about his current work: her letter encouraged him to believe that he had done much to help young people, but she hoped that he would 'not find this too much of a strain'.<sup>122</sup> She added that 'It is a great and noble work to be able to influence young lives for good. And you dear have an understanding and sympathetic heart'.<sup>123</sup> Harvey enjoyed an exceptionally close relationship with his mother, and her advice was meant to strengthen his resolve, but her letter may also have drawn parallels in his mind between his own longing for his distant family, and the families that he was forced to tear asunder. Harvey's closest confidant was his brother Eric, who sent a letter at roughly the same time which stated only

Dear old Will,

I will pray. You know that I love you.

Your brother, Eric.<sup>124</sup>

Harvey was depressed, and reaching out to his family for comfort.

At this point, Harvey's correspondence received in Chesterfield from his family stopped. It was followed by concerned letters dated between 17-24 April from co-workers Barnel Kay, W. White, and William Botham, regarding his sudden disappearance.<sup>125</sup> Harvey had quit his job without giving notice.

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<sup>121</sup> F.W. Harvey to Ivor Gurney, 2 March 1914, GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/9.

<sup>122</sup> Matilda Harvey to F.W. Harvey, 4 April 1914, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/7.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Eric Harvey to F.W. Harvey, [1913-1914], GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/23.

<sup>125</sup> Barnel Kay to F.W. Harvey, 17 April 1914, GA, FWH, D12912/1/5/7; W. White to F.W. Harvey, 18 April 1914, GA, FWH, D12912/1/5/8; William Botham to F.W. Harvey, 24 [April] 1914, GA, FWH, D12912/1/5/9.

In Harvey's novel, Will disappears as well: in early 1914, following the discovery that his lover had been murdered by her jealous husband, Will simply leaves his office without saying anything to anyone and never returns – not out of fear, but because of shock and depression.<sup>126</sup> The character later tells his brother and mother that he just 'walked out of the office, and out of town'.<sup>127</sup> He continues walking for months, from village to village, basking in the joys of the countryside, and meeting colourful provincial characters. Most importantly, he meets a beautiful gypsy woman whom he had once encountered in his youth.<sup>128</sup> To him, she represents all that is good and pure about the English countryside, in stark contrast to the adulterous Mrs Bransbury-Stuart. In the novel, Gypsy – the only name ever given for her – is destined to be the love of his life, perhaps representing his passion for the Gloucestershire countryside. Will stays with her people for a few days, before continuing his wandering, and eventually returns home at the news of Britain's declaration of war.<sup>129</sup> It is the war and the chance to enlist that saves him from his aimlessness.

The account in the novel is certainly fictionalized, but there is probably some truth to it. A letter of 6 May from co-worker John Rawcliffe shows that Harvey had returned to The Redlands, where he replied to the letters of his concerned former office-mates, telling them that he had gone on 'a walking tour'.<sup>130</sup> Rawcliffe was not surprised to hear that a doctor had told Harvey that he was near to having a nervous breakdown. Rawcliffe, too, had observed the stress that Harvey was under. The letter indicates that Harvey had left the office so suddenly that he forgot his coat, which he had asked them to return

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<sup>126</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', pp. 150-51, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 168.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 169-77.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 173-77.

<sup>130</sup> John Rawcliffe to F.W. Harvey, 6 May 1914, GA, FWH, D12912/1/5/10.

(Rawcliffe states that they never found it).<sup>131</sup> Harvey may really have walked straight from the office and into the country, or he may have returned to Minsterworth and then gone hiking. Either way, it is likely that he did indulge in some sort of ‘walking tour’. He had no reason to lie about this fact to Rawcliffe, and he was known as a keen walker throughout his life. What can be certain is that the walk would only have lasted a few weeks at most, rather than the months depicted in the novel, as the letters show that he disappeared around 17 April, but had written back to Rawcliffe from Minsterworth by 6 May.

Very little documentation survives to tell us what Harvey did on his return to Minsterworth. He certainly stayed at The Redlands, evidenced by a postcard sent to him there from his mother in June 1914, as she was visiting Eric at Oxford.<sup>132</sup> A letter from Rawcliffe dated 11 July 1914 indicates that Harvey did not take up any other work, but was instead writing – although the letter does not indicate what.<sup>133</sup> Harvey entered a period of purposelessness. Even worse, he found himself again experiencing the guilt of living off of the generosity of his mother.

The declaration of war saved him from this ignominy. He saw it as a chance to find adventure pursuing a righteous cause, serving not only King and Country, but God as well. Writing years after the war, he retained this belief. In his novel, news of the war comes while Eric – who is suffering his own crisis of identity over his decision to take holy orders – is praying:

‘O Lord Jesus,’ he praye[d], ‘I love you and I want to serve you faithfully and truly at any cost, at any price of suffering and endeavour. Then show me how! Let me understand your commands!’

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Postcard from Matilda Harvey to F.W. Harvey, 9 June 14, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/28.

<sup>133</sup> John Rawcliffe to F.W. Harvey, 11 July 1914, GA, FWH, D12912/1/5/11.



That prayer was answered only by the sudden news of war's proclamation, which fell like a clap of thunder upon millions of ears.<sup>134</sup>

Even with the knowledge, in hindsight, that the war would claim Eric's life, Harvey saw it as the defining event that would save Eric – and himself – from uncertainty. A few pages later in the novel, Will has joined the Gloucestershire Regiment. His mother is distraught at his going to war:

[Will:] 'I am happy in everything but the thought of leaving you here alone. I have leapt into chances to live as a man should, to risk life finely for all I love; instead of living like a beetle... a snake... a crawling poison.'

'Dearest don't! how [sic] unhappy you must have been!'

'Yes, I am sick,' he cried, 'of bread at the world's price. I will eat it at God's price – joyfully – though I eat nothing after. The hope fills me with glorious happiness.'<sup>135</sup>

Harvey knew that the war had been his salvation. His belief in Britain's cause – which he saw as God's, too – meant that life as a soldier would allow him to pursue a career for which he had a passion. No longer was he bound to muddle through a hated job merely to make ends meet, eating 'bread at the world's price'. He believed that being a soldier would give him 'bread [...] at God's price': it provided inspiration for poetry, and the ample free time that often plagues soldiers with boredom would allow him time to craft verse while still being fed and paid, with the possibility of giving his life in service as the collateral. By August 1914, Harvey was on the way to becoming not just a poet, but a soldier-poet.

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<sup>134</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 157, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., p. 167.

## Chapter II: The Front Lines and the 5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette

### August 1914 – April 1916

The First World War would be the defining period of Harvey's life. Events early in the war from August 1914 to April 1916 allowed him to rise to fame through a combination of circumstances that would not have occurred otherwise. The Gloucestershire Regiment formed twenty-five battalions during the war; had Harvey joined any other battalion than the 1/5<sup>th</sup> then his life story would have been vastly different. He may have risen to the rank of Lieutenant in any of these, and may also have earned the DCM and the right to bear those letters as post-nominals, but it was as a direct and unique result of joining the 1/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment that he would earn his most coveted title: 'Poet'.

Harvey adapted well to army life, and revelled in the camaraderie it afforded. Many of his post-war writings would reflect how much he idealised this state of fellowship that existed early in his wartime experiences. His novel demonstrates this most clearly:

The truth will permit no question of these men going sorrowfully to war, driven like sheep to slaughter. That is a false modern idea.

I say, and know, that there was joy in those days even in filthy death. John Meadows' jokes gave courage and bravery in the worst trenches. Ray Knight's gallant soul shone like fire upon the coldest night. Some cannot understand this. But they have not lived with these men.

[...] Such men were joyful in each other's company. Circumstances could not vanquish that joy. It illuminated billets here [training in England], and barns in Flanders. It did not fail in the filthiest trench...<sup>1</sup>

The names of real comrades, Ray Knight and John Meadows, show that this part of the novel was based in reality for Harvey, not imagination.<sup>2</sup> This

<sup>1</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 185, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>2</sup> John Meadows was in A Company, 1/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters, according to 'The First Fifth Gloucesters. Active Service Roll.', *The Citizen*, 30 March 1915.

companionship meant much to him, and was certainly his most prominent memory of the war. Even his post-war memoirs would contain the word 'comrades' in the title.

Harvey did acknowledge that army camaraderie was not always ideal. His novel claims that: 'they were [not] all saints or even pleasant fellows. There were in this regiment characters as despicable as any civilian. The joy of a wide unique comradeship, which was the joy of those days, was sometimes dissipated.'<sup>3</sup> Harvey holds civilians as the standard for how despicable a person could be, probably a reflection of his former legal career. He saw some of the worst aspects of humanity as a lawyer before the war; now as a common soldier he would find himself serving alongside men who were of the same sort that he had prosecuted before. However, as a man who always felt at ease with those of any class, he seems to have enjoyed this sense of equality as a member of the ranks. His novel provides supporting evidence, as passages covering the protagonist's early army days often lapse into colourful stories told by provincial Gloucestershire recruits in their native dialect, demonstrating Harvey's love of their company. These conversations took place on work details and in over-crowded transports, and were therefore by nature the kind to which a middle-class 'gentleman-ranker', but not a more typical middle-class officer, would be privy.

In later life, Harvey came to be seen as a defender of the common man in the courts; this began during his time in the service. As a private who happened to be a lawyer, he was in a rare position to defend his mates from military justice. When Private Albert Gainer was accused of sleeping on sentry

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<sup>3</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 186, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

duty in December 1914, Harvey was allowed to act as his defence counsel.<sup>4</sup> Again, in February 1915, he acted as counsel for Private Howard Mace, on the same charge.<sup>5</sup> His defence of Mace, at least, was successful, as Harvey wrote home to tell his mother the good news.<sup>6</sup> Harvey never really cared for his career as a lawyer, but he relished the opportunity to use it to protect his comrades. As the years passed, these courts martial would become some of his favourite memories of the war.

Impending combat seems to have led Harvey to think even more about his spiritual health. In August 1914 he converted to Roman Catholicism while the battalion was training in Swindon (which also would have suited his plans to marry the Irish-Catholic Anne Kane).<sup>7</sup> The 1/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters continued to train in England until 13 March 1915, when orders were received to 'prepare for foreign service'.<sup>8</sup> The unit departed from Southampton aboard the SS *Invicta* on the 28<sup>th</sup>, and landed in Boulogne the same day. From there they marched the three miles to Pont de Brique, boarded trains and journeyed to Cassel, then marched a further four miles to billets in the farmland surrounding Steenvoorde.<sup>9</sup>

From 8-11 April, companies of the 1/5<sup>th</sup> entered front-line trenches in Ploegsteert Wood (commonly called 'Plug Street' by British soldiers), where they received instruction in trench warfare by observing a fellow West Country battalion from the Somerset Light Infantry. The Gloucesters were initiated to combat during this period of instruction, when some of the men experienced

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<sup>4</sup> Summary of Evidence for the Prosecution of No. 2316, Private Albert Gainer, 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment, December 1914, GA, FWH, D12912/7/1; Private Albert Gainer to [Commander, 1/5 Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment], [December 1914], GA, FWH, D12912/7/1; Charge Sheet, Private Albert Gainer, 11 December 1914, GA, FWH, D12912/7/1.

<sup>5</sup> Summary of Evidence for the Prosecution of No. 2045, Private Howard Mace, 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment, [January] 1915, GA, FWH, D12912/7/1; Charge Sheet, Private Howard Mace, 7 January 1915, GA, FWH, D12912/7/1.

<sup>6</sup> F.W. Harvey to Matilda Harvey, 21 February 1916, D12912/1/1/29.

<sup>7</sup> Boden, p. 60.

<sup>8</sup> 1/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment War Diary, 1914-1918, 1920, SoGM.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

shelling and sniper fire. Members of Harvey's company (C Company, commanded by Major N.H. Waller) were wounded, becoming the battalion's first casualties.<sup>10</sup> On the 12<sup>th</sup> the entire battalion retired to the rear for further training.<sup>11</sup>

Shortly after his first combat experiences, Harvey received a letter from Ivor Gurney, who was now training with the 2/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters. Gurney was anxious about what to expect when he arrived at the front: 'What the hell do you do and think of in the trenches?' he asked, 'And (this is important to me) what effect does the mere noise and concussion of the shells have on you? And on other, normal people? Did you feel any effects from the German gas?'<sup>12</sup> Gurney's queries about the effects of artillery and gas on 'normal people' indicates that he may have been concerned that these weapons could exacerbate his own mental illness, or perhaps he was worried that they might affect his hearing and therefore his ability to compose and appreciate music. Gurney reflected on the possibility of both men dying in combat, stating poetically that 'If our spirits merely haunt the well loved fields of old, we shall see enough of each other'.<sup>13</sup> We do not have Harvey's reply to this letter, but an entry in one of Harvey's scrapbooks tells us how he felt about artillery: 'Dreadful to be killed with a shell... waiting... passive.'<sup>14</sup> Harvey preferred to take the initiative in combat, as the notebook entry also indicates: 'Shot on patrol... Exultant... Foot in icy water. Didn't know till cold[,] almost too cold to move. Aching. Creeping on. Thank the good gods for that! Who goes there? An

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<sup>10</sup> George Francis Helm, 'Introduction', in *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, ed. by George Francis Helm, post-war bound reprint (Gloucester: John Jennings, [1920]), p. xii; 1/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>11</sup> 1/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>12</sup> Gurney to Harvey, [Apr.-May] 1915, GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/10.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Scrapbook of F.W. Harvey, GA, CEH, D3921.II.38.

adventure. Shot on patrol.’<sup>15</sup> Harvey, and many young soldiers of his class, sought the Arthurian or Homeric adventure in combat that they had been taught to revere in the public schools of the day.

Gurney’s letter also asked Harvey for his thoughts on the literature of the day. Gurney mentions that he had formerly forwarded Rupert Brooke’s sonnets to Harvey, and asks if he had found time or inclination to write verse.<sup>16</sup> This prodding, along with Rupert Brooke’s example, may have inspired Harvey to begin his most successful poetic period of his life.

Not only did the army supply camaraderie for Harvey, it gave him an excellent balance of activities that could offer subject matter and the free time necessary to write. Most importantly, it provided an outlet for his poetic ambitions with the creation of the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette* trench journal, which launched on 12 April 1915. The *Gazette* was edited by the battalion’s Church of England chaplain, Captain George Francis Helm, and was the brainchild of the battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Collett. It was originally produced on a typewriter; not until the third issue in June 1915 did it begin to be printed.<sup>17</sup> By August 1915 it was selling 1,000 copies a month, and by the time of the anniversary edition it was selling 1,550, credited by the editor to the work of ‘Lieutenants Harvey, King, and C.W. Winterbotham.’<sup>18</sup> Harvey’s work exceeded all others for talent and volume, leading Helm to recognise him as the key to the early survival of the paper. In the July 1915 issue he went so far as to state:

The Editor does not think that his readers are quite alive to the seriousness of the situation. Were it not for the untiring and delightful efforts of ‘F.W.H.’ this paper would have had to discontinue publication. – If

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Gurney to Harvey, [Apr.-May] 1915, GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/10.

<sup>17</sup> Helm, ‘Introduction’, pp. iv-v.

<sup>18</sup> George Francis Helm, ‘Fumes from the Editor’s Water Bottle’, *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, August 1915, GA, FWH, D12912/8/1/1; George Francis Helm, ‘April 1915 - April 1916’, *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, April 1916, GA, FWH, D12912/8/1/1.

England requires more munitions, we need more contributors.<sup>19</sup>

Harvey is still regarded as the driving literary force behind the paper. Vivien Noakes states of the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette* that, 'As with other notably successful trench publications, a single poet contributed work of remarkable quality – in this case, F.W. Harvey.'<sup>20</sup> As the first British trench newspaper, it would set the standard for many to follow, with Harvey's poems at the forefront of its success and quality.

In Harvey's novel, the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette* is also the key to his character's literary success. In one scene, Will writes a letter to his mother:

[The chaplain] has started a trench paper, of which I enclose a copy. Sandwiched between the casualties and some delicious regimental scandals are a couple of poems by me. It is queer to get published after all my efforts. What pleases me, is that the chaps like 'em. Perhaps this is the only public that I will ever have. But it is a good one.<sup>21</sup>

Inclusion of the *Gazette* in the fictionalised version of his life demonstrates that he recognised its importance to his poetic career. He was glad that his work was enjoyed by his comrades, and likewise appreciated the fame he found among them. In his prison-camp lecture, 'Are Poets Any Use?' (1916), he stated that during his time in the trenches he was surprised to find that poetry – no doubt including his own – was

liked not merely by the public school and varsity men of which there were plenty in the ranks in those days, but also by rough uneducated people. Of course I ought not to have been astonished. Poetry has little enough to do with high culture but a very great deal to do with high feeling. That these were men of high feeling I knew well enough then, and still better as time went on.<sup>22</sup>

He revelled in the opportunity that the army gave him to share his love of poetry with all classes. Fortunately for him, we will never know if he really would have

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<sup>19</sup> George Francis Helm, 'Bricks from the Editor's Pack', *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, July 1915, TJUM.

<sup>20</sup> Noakes, p. xv.

<sup>21</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 190, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>22</sup> POW-camp lectures notebook, 1916-1917, GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 1.

been content for them to be his 'only public'.

His first poem published in the *Gazette* was 'The Battalion A.B.C.' in the launch issue. It used rhyming couplets similar to children's alphabet books, but instead contained jokes about the 1/5<sup>th</sup>, the army, and the war. Some lines were insider jokes for those in the unit, for example 'A is the Adjutant's horse, who foretells / Our real destination to be the Dardanelles', others were more universally understood, such as 'D is the word which all of us said / When the billets were changed and we hadn't a bed'.<sup>23</sup> He was writing primarily for an audience of 1/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters, not realising yet how large and diverse the paper's readership would become.

Indeed, the impact of this seemingly insignificant poem was much greater than Harvey could have dreamed. Graham Seal has noted in his groundbreaking studies of trench culture that soldiers' alphabets were based on the tradition of occupational alphabets which had existed since the mid-nineteenth century. These were typically created for all-male occupations, and as such, would have been familiar to the soldiers.<sup>24</sup> Harvey was creating normality in the abnormal circumstances of combat by continuing a tradition that existed in civilian occupations. His poem alludes to this tradition with the lines 'M is our money – exactly eight bob – / Paid us on Fridays to finish this "job."<sup>25</sup> By calling the war a 'job', he compares it to a civilian occupation, although the quotation marks demonstrate that it is anything but normal. Seal stated that these alphabets came to have an 'immense popularity among Great War soldiers of all the English-speaking nations'.<sup>26</sup> He notes that they existed in

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<sup>23</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'The Battalion A.B.C.', *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, April 1915, TJUM.

<sup>24</sup> Graham Seal, "'We're Here Because We're Here": Trench Culture of the Great War', *Folklore*, 124 (2013), 178-99 (192-93).

<sup>25</sup> Harvey, 'Battalion A.B.C.', TJUM.

<sup>26</sup> Seal, 'We're Here', 191-92.



many trench publications, citing eight different examples in his article.<sup>27</sup> He does not cite Harvey's, yet Harvey's 'The Battalion A.B.C.' has the distinction of being the first of these ever published, having appeared in the first number of the first English-language trench journal of the war.

Seal asserts that 'the very large numbers of alphabets that appeared in trench journals suggest that not only was there considerable interest in these expressions, but that they were also of some emotional value to their readers and writers.'<sup>28</sup> He suggests that the alphabets placed the uncontrollable war in the organisational structure of the alphabet to give an illusion of some control.<sup>29</sup> While there is truth to this, normality was probably more important to private soldiers of this war than 'control'. Most working-class men were brought up with little expectation of control over their careers, which more than likely would have been decided for them at birth. Alphabets such as this could help a soldier to feel as if soldiering was just another job that had to be completed. The genre was popular before the war, and therefore others that followed may have struck on the idea independently, so it cannot be definitively ascertained how much influence Harvey's alphabet had on later ones (although the Royal Fusiliers' journal, *The Gasper*, of June 1916 contains 'The Atkins Alphabet' with letters D, E, and H representing the same terms as Harvey's, to include alluding to – but not printing – the word 'damn').<sup>30</sup>

Seal notes that the popularity of these alphabets was also owing to the relatively low ability required to create them, and the fact that they did not need to be anything more than 'simply doggerel' to be enjoyed.<sup>31</sup> Harvey's alphabet

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 191-95.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 194.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> N.A.T.S., 'The Atkins Alphabet', *The Gasper*, 5 June 1916, No. 18 edition, FWWAMD.

<sup>31</sup> Seal, 'We're Here', 193.

cannot claim to be great poetry, with such lines as 'J is for Joffre – we have'nt [sic] yet met him / But thousands of Germans will never forget him'.<sup>32</sup> Many of Harvey's earliest poems in the *Gazette* were not particularly well-developed, but they served the more pressing need of providing entertainment for the soldiers at the front. His trench-journal poetry would improve in quality and maturity as he published seventy-six more poems in the *Gazette* by September 1916, all the while gaining confidence that his audience would tolerate more refined verse.

As Harvey began to exercise his literary powers for an audience, he also showed his value as a soldier. On 15 April the battalion started the cycle of rotating in and out of the trenches as a fully-trained unit responsible for a sector of Ploegsteert Wood, continuing to do so through May and June. This was only 11 kilometres south of Ypres, where the second battle of that name was raging, yet combat for the 1/5<sup>th</sup> was limited to artillery, sniper fire, and patrolling, with occasional casualties.<sup>33</sup> The battalion suffered its first combat death when Lieutenant C.F.R. Barnett was killed by a sniper four days after entering the trenches.<sup>34</sup> There were no assaults from either side, only the monotony of holding the line, and the fear of being killed by a well-placed shot or a seemingly random shell-burst during this frustratingly-passive combat. On 4 May the battalion war diary records the Germans directly opposite Harvey's company shouting 'Shut up Gloucesters', and 'England Kaput', a sign of a relatively quiet, albeit still dangerous, sector.<sup>35</sup>

Passivity did not suit Harvey's temperament, and his desire to seek action regularly led him to volunteer for night patrols. He wrote of patrolling in

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<sup>32</sup> Harvey, 'Battalion A.B.C.', TJUM.

<sup>33</sup> Holmes, *Western Front*, pp. 69-71.

<sup>34</sup> 1/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

his novel: 'Willie volunteered for all night patrols. That was better than standing in a trench to curse the stars that would never go out. That was his nature. He could never wait. Success, danger, glory, death itself, must come quickly.'<sup>36</sup> A few pages of notes on patrolling survive among his papers. These may have been made for use in instructing new soldiers, perhaps replacements in 1/5<sup>th</sup> or later with the Gloucestershire Regiment's training battalion, the 3/5<sup>th</sup>.<sup>37</sup> '[G]ood initiative = good scout', he wrote, emphasising the importance of individual initiative multiple times in his notes (see figure II).<sup>38</sup> Although only in the lower ranks, he could exercise more freedom to do as he thought best on these patrols. On 26 April, the brigade commander, Brigadier General McClintock, sent a special message to the battalion commending its 'many & enterprising patrols'.<sup>39</sup> The commanders in the 1/5<sup>th</sup> would have made sure to reward the men who gained this distinction for the battalion.

During this period, Harvey continued publishing poetry that documented the battalion's experiences. In the May 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette* he published 'The French Roadmenders', a triolet which complained of having to march on uneven roads. This was followed by another humorous poem, 'The Route March', which was again an infantryman's complaint about marching. However, his third poem in the issue is possibly Harvey's first serious war poem, as he begins to reflect on the cost of the war with 'To Rupert Brooke – Dead in the Defence of Beauty'.<sup>40</sup> The poem uses Brooke's death as an illustration of Harvey's own thoughts on the importance of poetry in war. It addresses Brooke,

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<sup>36</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 193, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>37</sup> F.W. Harvey, Notes on patrolling, [1915-1916], GA, FWH, D12912/7/1.

<sup>38</sup> Harvey, 'Notes on patrolling', GA, FWH, D12912/7/1. Both instances of 'good' were added in with a caret mark.

<sup>39</sup> 1/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>40</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'To Rupert Brooke – Dead in the Defence of Beauty', 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, May 1915, TJUM.

asking him to

Take the praise  
Of all who in these sordid days  
Have needed loveliness.<sup>41</sup>

As far as Harvey was concerned, it was the poet's job during war to remind readers of the 'loveliness' that still existed in the world, to give hope and to provide a reason to fight. The poem ends by stating that those

Who Lov[e] thee – love beauty more,  
Since in thy death thou showest plain  
Though Songs must cease and Life must fall  
The things that made the songs remain.<sup>42</sup>

In early June the battalion moved north of Ploegsteert Woods to trenches near Messines. On 6 June they were ordered to conduct long-range small-arms fire on German positions, at the same time as the Royal Engineers exploded a mine under enemy trenches. This became a protracted firefight which added to the battalion's growing casualty list. By now the 1/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters were considered a veteran unit, and were made responsible for training elements of the 9<sup>th</sup> Essex in trench duties. On the 16<sup>th</sup> the battalion was relieved from the trenches, and would spend nearly a month refitting, reorganising, retraining, and even being inspected by Lord Kitchener himself.<sup>43</sup>

In between training events, Harvey certainly worked on material for the *Gazette*, and also found time to participate in battalion cricket. The July 1915 *Gazette* shows that Harvey represented the Gloucester XI versus 'The rest of the Battalion', as well as 'The Men' versus 'The Officers'.<sup>44</sup> It seems that his promotion to lance corporal occurred between these two matches, as he was

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> 1/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>44</sup> 'Cricket Behind Trenches', 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, July 1915, TJUM.

listed as 'Pte. Harvey' in the first, and 'L/Cpl. F.W. Harvey' in the second.<sup>45</sup> As seen, he would immortalise these matches when he reworked parts of his pre-war poem 'Cricket Song' to become 'Cricket (The Catch)'. Later, as a POW, Harvey would return to this time again with 'A Cricket Match', as he soon began to view these days playing cricket behind the trenches as a sort of 'Golden Age' in his wartime experience.

From 25-27 June, the 1/5<sup>th</sup> conducted night marches from Bailleul to Gonnehem, roughly 30 kilometres south, arriving at 1:30 a.m.<sup>46</sup> Harvey memorialised the end of this march in 'Gonnehem', a poem which captures how rest behind the trenches in an idyllic setting could be a balm to a tired soldier's soul:

Of Gonnehem it will be said,  
That we arrived there late and worn  
With marching, and were given a bed  
Of lovely straw. And then at morn  
On rising from deep sleep saw dangle –  
Shining in the sun to spangle  
The all-blue heaven – branch loads of red  
Bright cherries which we bought to eat.  
Dew-wet, dawn-cool, and sunny sweet.  
There was a tiny court-yard too  
Wherein one shady walnut grew.  
Unruffled peace the farm encloses [-]<sup>47</sup>  
I wonder if beneath that tree  
The meditating hens still be.  
Are the white walls now gay with roses?  
Does the small fountain yet run free?  
I wonder if that dog still dozes...  
Some day we must go back to see.<sup>48</sup>

The poem reads as if it were written by a veteran years after, when the event had taken on a tint of nostalgia. Yet it was only published a couple of months

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid. (Townsend's biography of Harvey states that his promotion was not until August 1915 [see p. 29], but the *Gazette* proves this untrue.)

<sup>46</sup> 1/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>47</sup> Hyphen is present in *A Gloucestershire Lad* but not in *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, probably an error by the *Gazette*'s printer.

<sup>48</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'In France', *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, August 1915, GA, FWH, D12912/8/1; Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 30.

later, in the August 1915 issue of the *Gazette*. A vague feeling of nostalgia often tinted Harvey's poems, but for him to conjure up feelings of a lost golden day so quickly afterwards shows that he had already realised that these days would be some of the best of his life. One year before the march to Gonnehem he had been living in ignominy after a major failure to adapt to an adult career. Now he was living the adventurous military life that he had wished for when he wrote 'Song of the Road', complete with forced route-marches only made bearable by camaraderie and the euphoric feelings aroused by physical labour.

The poem highlights the fragility of life during war. The final lines ask if the farm still remains untouched by combat. As battle raged across the Western Front, there was no guarantee even a few weeks later that this peaceful place of refuge had not been destroyed. If that farm could be destroyed, so too could the lives of the men who found refuge there. Harvey is telling his readers that such days must be cherished, because for many they will be their last. The poem's ending wishes that they can someday revisit the farm, therefore hoping that they will survive to do so. This rest farm was an island of beauty surrounded by destruction and death, and as such it represented all that was good and enjoyable in a life too often filled with hardship and sorrows. The poem hopes that the ability to enjoy beautiful moments in life, too, could survive the war.

That same summer, Harvey wrote one of his most enduring poems, 'In Flanders', published in the July 1915 issue of the *Gazette*. It remains popular today, in part owing to Gurney's setting of it. The poem signalled a shift in Harvey's war poetry, which was becoming much more serious and contemplative than his previous work. It is Harvey's homesick lament for his Gloucestershire countryside, beginning 'I'm homesick for my hills again / – My

hills again!<sup>49</sup> The poem's title places the speaker in Flanders, yet all place names in the verse – Severn, Cotswold, and Malvern – are far from Flemish. The Belgian countryside is referred to only as 'Where the land is low / Like a huge imprisoning O', in clear contrast to Gloucestershire's hills.<sup>50</sup> The emphasis on English names and lack of foreign ones shows the speaker trying to escape his current circumstances. It is the first of Harvey's wartime poems that reflect on his beloved home, a signal that the initial adventure and excitement of deployment to France was beginning to be tainted by homesickness.

As Harvey was the key to the success of the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, the *Gazette* would in turn become the key to his personal success. In October 1916, a *Times Literary Supplement (TLS)* review of trench journals by E.B. Osborn declared the *Gazette* to be not only the oldest, but also 'the most literary of the British trench journals', and quoted Harvey's 'In Flanders' in full, along with 'The C.O. (With apologies to Herrick.)' as examples of this literary wealth.<sup>51</sup> The reviewer's words demonstrated the prejudice of the times, using 'In Flanders' as evidence for his belief in the superiority of the English soul over the German's. Early in the review he indicated that the German people were incapable of beautiful and poetic thoughts:

But the thought that 'the poor devil [the German soldier] knows no better' is always at work in the bottom of the British soldier's mind; as the toad is a toad, so the Boche is a Boche, so what's the use of being angry with him? It is his misfortune rather than his fault [...] that he is a savage brute and a dirty fighter.<sup>52</sup>

In contrast, Harvey's poem proved to Osborn that there was

an element of what the Russians call 'proster' (the opening of the heart to vastness) in the British soul, which cannot find full contentment in the [...] French countryside, but longs for the wide prospects and spacious parks

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<sup>49</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'In Flanders', *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, July 1915, TJUM.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> E.B. Osborn, 'Trench Journals', *TLS*, 12 October 1916, pp. 481-82, TLSHA.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 481.

and mist-veiled heights of its native land.<sup>53</sup>

Osborn's claims were aided in the fact that the only contemporary German war poem most British readers would be familiar with was 'Gott Strafe England', known by most as 'The Hymn of Hate'. Harvey's writing of love of his native land was a direct contrast to the German hatred for the foreign land. The reviewer was using 'In Flanders' for a political purpose that Harvey may not have intended. Still, a review in such a prestigious literary journal added to Harvey's esteem and popularity. Harvey could never have guessed when he began writing poems for the humble *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette* that it would lead directly to his publication in the *TLS*.

Osborn's focus on the pacific nature of the poem to prove that the peaceable, countryside-loving British were superior to the war-mongering Germans was a selective reading. Although a pastoral poem, it is not without martial undertones. Military imagery appears in the lines

To see above the Severn plain  
Unscabbarded against the sky  
The blue high blade of Cotswold lie.<sup>54</sup>

The poem seems to suggest that, although located far from the front, the speaker's native land itself is at war, unsheathed like a sword, as the Severn plain is 'unscabbarded' and the Cotswolds are now a 'blue high blade'. It also notes that the clouds floating past the Malvern Hills create 'a train / Of shadows', which suggests the trainloads of men leaving for war; men who are only shadows in their native land, as they exist there now only in memory.<sup>55</sup> The speaker in 'In Flanders' longs for his peaceful country, but it is not a country at peace. It is instead a country that fights, and sends its people to war.

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 482.

<sup>54</sup> Harvey, 'In Flanders', TJUM.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*



From 13-16 July the battalion underwent a period of digging second-line trenches at Noeux-les-Mines and Sailly-Labourse. The unpleasantness of task was compounded by rain. The war diary entries for those dates state simply that it 'rained heavily', and was 'very wet'.<sup>56</sup> Harvey's description of the event in 'Noeux-les-Mines' was much less stoical, published alongside 'Gonnehem' two months later:

There we did stay a live-long night:  
And sad and evil was our plight.  
Like water from a water butt  
The rain poured down. And doors were shut.<sup>57</sup>

The poem describes a sleepless, wet night, which only ends when

With Satan and his powers in league  
A sergeant then did cry 'Fatigue'  
And out into the lashing rain  
We all must tumble once again.  
To dig in trenches and to wish  
We were not human men, but fish.<sup>58</sup>

This continued Harvey's practice of writing poems about actual events, using poetry to cope with hardship. This poem may not have been particularly good, but it provided a collective gripe for the battalion, helping them all to vent their frustrations by seeing their grievances in published form. As Seal asserts,

Complaining is traditionally one of the common soldier's true pleasures [...] from the 'chats' or lice, to the food, the mud, the bureaucracy, officers, the mainstream press, propaganda, 'shirkers', and the sheer madness of it all. When these appeared in the public form of the trench journal they were usually veiled in humorous ditties, verse, and anecdote.<sup>59</sup>

The battalion had spent the past month reorganising and honing fighting skills, and had been preparing to enter trenches in front of Noeux-les-Mines, but instead they found themselves digging support trenches in the muck behind that

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<sup>56</sup> 1/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>57</sup> Harvey, 'In France', GA, FWH, D12912/8/1/1.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Seal, 'We're Here', 195.

location.<sup>60</sup> This would be a blow to their pride as fighting men, and to their *esprit de corps*. The poem hints at criticism of the officers who organised the digging party, and insinuates that it was a poorly-planned affair, noting that the men were carelessly quartered in a building with a leaky roof. A pair of couplets describes the men's attempts to sleep in a flooded billet:

One, like unto Diogenes  
Betook him to a tub – and fleas.  
His name I cannot quite recall  
But what *he* said was best of all.<sup>61</sup>

We are not told what this unnamed soldier said; we can assume that it was too insubordinate or profane to be printed. This poem was not meant to entertain the general public; it was meant to entertain Harvey's comrades, commiserate with them, and make them laugh. As Vivien Noakes asserts, it is important not to discount the lesser poetry of the war, as it teaches us what the men wanted to read at the time:

These verses were written for the men by the men. For an outsider... to attempt a humorous interpretation [of the war's] experience would have been a grotesque insult. For the men themselves, however, such humour was a lifeline.<sup>62</sup>

Not only was Harvey using poetry for the benefit of his comrades, he was also giving his audience something they could relate to, making poetry more accessible to the average soldier.

Shortly after, the 1/5<sup>th</sup> moved south by rail to the Loos sector. On 20 July they relieved the French 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 93<sup>rd</sup> Infantry at Hebuterne.<sup>63</sup> Arrival in a completely new area would call for a renewed effort in reconnaissance to gain information on the unfamiliar terrain.

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<sup>60</sup> 1/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>61</sup> Harvey, 'In France', GA, FWH, D12912/8/1/1.

<sup>62</sup> Noakes, p. xii.

<sup>63</sup> 1/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

### Distinguished Conduct Medal

As the sun set on 3 August 1915, Harvey prepared for another night reconnaissance patrol with volunteers from C Company. The main patrol party of four was to be led by Harvey's best friend in the battalion, Corporal R.E. Knight, with Lance Corporal Wynter Morgan leading the support party of four more.<sup>64</sup> Harvey assisted Knight with the main effort. Also on the patrol was Lance Corporal Kenneth Robertson.<sup>65</sup> Harvey, Knight, and Robertson comprised something of a literary trio, as Knight was an occasional contributor to the *Gazette*, and Robertson claimed the esteem of having designed the cover.<sup>66</sup> Perhaps these men banded together through common interests, or perhaps Harvey's encouragement among section-mates led them to contribute to the *Gazette*. Robertson also seems to have been a good friend of Harvey's, evidenced by a letter of January 1915 in which Robertson was familiar enough to ask to be remembered to Eric Harvey.<sup>67</sup> In the September 1916 issue of the *Gazette*, Helm particularly thanked members of C Company for their contributions to its pages.<sup>68</sup> These thanks appeared conspicuously near the story of Knight and Harvey's actions on this particular patrol – indicating a link between their exploits and the *Gazette*'s champions.

Prior to the patrol, the men busied themselves conducting final checks of personal kit and weaponry, to be double-checked by the patrol leaders. Aside from Harvey, all of the patrol members carried rifles, along with bombs for the

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<sup>64</sup> 'With the 1/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters – A Chat With Its Two D.C.M.'s – How Their Decorations Were Won', *Gloucester Echo*, [1915], found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'H', GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 33.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> R.E. Knight, 'Whist Drive', 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, August 1915, TJUM; Helm, 'Introduction', p. iv.

<sup>67</sup> K.A. Robertson to F.W. Harvey, 26 January 1915, GA, FWH, D12912/1/3/4.

<sup>68</sup> George Francis Helm, 'Fumes from the Editor's Water Bottle', 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, September 1915, TJUM.

two grenadiers. Harvey personally carried a revolver and a bludgeon, a testament to the brutality that he had become capable of after months in the trenches.<sup>69</sup> His baton is reported to have been fashioned from a threshing flail that he had picked up in the countryside.<sup>70</sup> References in the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette* indicate that he had nicknamed this agrarian weapon ‘Kosh’, an alternate (and more Germanic) spelling of ‘cosh’.<sup>71</sup> It certainly is the mark of a poet to find a more colourful word than simply ‘bludgeon’ or ‘baton’ for such a weapon. It is also indicative of that quest for Arthurian adventure instilled in Harvey’s education, naming weapons in the same way as heroes of legend.

The goal of the patrol was to ascertain the presence of a German listening post in no-man’s-land, suspected to be near a distinct cluster of bushes. At the arraigned time, the men slipped over the parapet into no-man’s-land. In his novel, Harvey described the initial moments of a patrol based on this one:

Darkness – a snaky wriggle over the parapet – our wire – suppressed oaths – no-man’s-land – whispers – tussocky grass that turned into figures and back to grass: advance of creeping men keeping touch as best they could over uneven ground; falling flat in to filth or water as floating stars lifted from the German lines and drifted slowly down upon them [...].<sup>72</sup>

The patrol moved forward in two four-man diamond-shaped formations, making use of the natural cover of vegetation and depressions in the terrain.<sup>73</sup> Much of the time would have been spent crawling, as Harvey stated with a biblical twist in his patrolling notes: ‘Upon thy belly shalt thou go’.<sup>74</sup> Approximately 350 yards

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<sup>69</sup> ‘The 5<sup>th</sup> Glo’ster Gazette. Some Interesting Contributions’, [1915], unknown publication, found in F.W. Harvey’s scrapbook ‘H’, GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 28.

<sup>70</sup> Townsend, p. 30; Brian Waters, ‘Gloucestershire’s Laureate – An Appreciation of F.W. Harvey’, *The Citizen*, 18 February 1957, found in F.W. Harvey’s loose scrapbook pages, GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/14, fol. 5.

<sup>71</sup> ‘Advertisements: Lost’, *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, August 1915, TJUM.

<sup>72</sup> Harvey, ‘Will Harvey’, pp. 193-94, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>73</sup> Harvey, ‘Notes on Patrolling’, GA, FWH, D12912/7/1.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

out from friendly trenches, Knight and Harvey located the enemy outpost. Fortunately for the Tommies, the German party displayed less noise-discipline, giving their position away when one *Soldat* coughed. Knight and Harvey exercised tactical patience; with whispers and hand signals they ordered their men to keep their attention on the German position, to wait and act on what developed. They were sure that the Germans had also heard them approaching, and knew it was best not to expose themselves.<sup>75</sup>

Their patience paid off. Again the Germans blundered, as one raised his head above the bushes to look for the British patrol. Knight fired, killing him, and then he and Harvey rushed the enemy, followed shortly by the rest of the party.<sup>76</sup> Harvey emptied his revolver, possibly killing another.<sup>77</sup> The Germans were so shocked by the audacity of the attack that they fled. Harvey chased after them alone, wielding his bludgeon, with the intent of stunning one and taking him prisoner. This impulsive solo charge is less surprising when one recalls the fierce temper that Bishop Frodsham had noted as sometimes manifesting itself in Harvey. He managed to bring one German soldier down, who raised his arms in surrender. Harvey dropped his 'Kosh' and grabbed him by the collar, brandishing his revolver in the man's face.<sup>78</sup> Some newspaper reports claimed that the German then 'treacherously attempted to snatch the revolver' after surrendering.<sup>79</sup> This was clearly an anti-German bias: the man did attempt to grab the pistol, but Harvey himself claimed that the German probably

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<sup>75</sup> 'With the 1/5<sup>th</sup>', GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 33.

<sup>76</sup> 'With the 1/5<sup>th</sup>', GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 33; 'Distinguished Conduct Medal. Awarded to Two Gloucester Territorials', unknown publication, [1915], found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'H', GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 20.

<sup>77</sup> 'With the 1/5<sup>th</sup>', GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 33.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> 'The Spoils of War. British Headquarters Aug. 15', unknown publication, [1915] found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'H', GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 20; 'Alarm Through a Cough', unknown publication, [1915] found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'H', GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 21. Note: These two separate articles use the same wording as quoted above regarding the revolver.

believed that he was about to be executed on the spot, forcing such a desperate action.<sup>80</sup> The two then struggled for control of the weapon, before Harvey regained it.<sup>81</sup> Strength built up through his many athletic pursuits probably gave Harvey an advantage. Now fearing for his own life, Harvey pulled the trigger, which responded with a mere click. In the confusion of the *melée* he had fired all of his rounds, not realising it until this vital moment.<sup>82</sup> At this point, the German turned and began running for his own trenches, while a machine gun opened up on the British party.<sup>83</sup>

Knight then gave the order to return to friendly lines.<sup>84</sup> In his novel, Harvey describes such a scene vividly:

– indiscriminate fire from both trenches – crawling on the belly: excited whispers – challenges – shots from British lines – ‘Let us in you bloody fools!’ Cries of recognition – falls into a friendly trench – congratulations then rum – short report – sleep – forgetfulness [...].<sup>85</sup>

All eight men arrived unharmed, leaving at least three Germans dead.<sup>86</sup>

Weapons retrieved from the site of the raid indicated that the German party was roughly the same size as the British patrol. Unfortunately for Harvey, he seems to have lost his ‘Kosh’. He stated in an interview that he dropped it during the struggle, while the following mock advertisement appeared in the August 1915 *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*: ‘Lost. Somewhere between the lines, Baton, one in number, answers to the name of Kosh. Finder please return to C Company.’<sup>87</sup> It seems that his advertisement was answered: it is said that Harvey displayed the bludgeon later in life as a souvenir, and even that he presented it to his mother

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<sup>80</sup> ‘With the 1/5<sup>th</sup>’, GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 33.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*; ‘Alarm’, GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 21.

<sup>84</sup> ‘Some Interesting Contributions’, GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 28.

<sup>85</sup> Harvey, ‘Will Harvey’, p. 194, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>86</sup> ‘Some Interesting Contributions’, GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 28.

<sup>87</sup> ‘With the 1/5<sup>th</sup>’, GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 33; ‘Advertisements: Lost’, TJUM.

on his return to England.<sup>88</sup> A unit adjacent to the 1/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters later sent a patrol out to confirm the destruction of the listening post; it is possible that they recovered Kosh along with the enemy weapons which they brought back from the site of the raid. A newspaper article stated that the recovering battalion claimed the enemy equipment by right of 'treasure trove' in reply to the 1/5<sup>th</sup> demanding that it be handed over to them as 'spoils of war'.<sup>89</sup> Humour, it seems, was still in good supply at the front.

This act of close-quarters combat must have had a deep psychological impact on Harvey. In an interview later that year he described his actions:

The sturdy solicitor-poet-soldier, Lieut. Harvey, confesses that after the first shot when he and his comrades rushed blazing away at the bush, he has no recollection of immediate happenings, except that he found himself opposite a German who vanished out of sight and recollection, for he could not remember whether he shot him with his revolver or what happened. His next recollection is letting fly at a German with a cudgel [...].<sup>90</sup>

Harvey's inability to remember what happened could have been an indication of memory loss related to post traumatic stress disorder. Had he shot the German who 'vanished out of sight', he may have repressed that memory out of guilt. It may equally have been a simple reluctance to boast of killing, especially as the account was published in the *Gloucester Echo*, which his mother and fiancée would probably read.

In the scrapbook donated to the Gloucestershire Archives by Cyril Hart, Harvey wrote 'I will not fear to take ALL LIFE. For God and not the devil rules the world. And he knows what experience we stand most in need of. Here is the key to all guilt and iron doors of [continuation lost]'.<sup>91</sup> An edited version of the quotation was used in one biography to suggest that Harvey had reconciled

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<sup>88</sup> Townsend, p. 30; Boden, p. 101.

<sup>89</sup> 'Spoils of War', GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 20.

<sup>90</sup> 'With the 1/5<sup>th</sup>', GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 33.

<sup>91</sup> Scrapbook of F.W. Harvey, GA, CEH, D3921.II.38.

himself with killing.<sup>92</sup> While it could be interpreted as a declaration of the righteousness of killing in combat, the recently acquired scrapbooks suggest that he had struggled with this issue. In scrapbook 'E', Harvey pasted two pages torn from the *King James Bible*. The first is Exodus 20, with the Ten Commandants stating 'Thou shalt not kill'. Pasted next to this is a page annotated at the top with 'What it is to kill, &c.', containing Christ's words of Matthew 5:21: 'Ye have heard it said by them of old time, thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgement'. Pasted below these is a newspaper picture of three British soldiers in pith helmets standing over men in white Arab dress who are lying face-down on the ground, captioned 'November 1 – A soldier about to kill one of three wounded Arabs'.<sup>93</sup> These biblical commands pasted next to a picture of imperially-sanctioned murder suggest that Harvey had wrestled with issues of religious morality versus soldierly duty.

However, two pages later he pasted 2 Kings 19, in which he underlined verse 35: 'And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand.'<sup>94</sup> Had this verse justified the killing of the nation's enemies for Harvey, with its example of God killing the enemies of the Judeans? He seems to have eventually settled on there being no absolute answer, writing at about the same time in another scrapbook, 'War – like everything else – is good or bad as it is waged.'<sup>95</sup> What is made clear by these scrapbooks is that Harvey did not take killing lightly, and saw it as a matter of conscience. Killing other men at the front may have affected him deeply.

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<sup>92</sup> Boden, p. 92.

<sup>93</sup> Scrapbook 'E', GA, FWH, D12912/6/3, fols. 42-43.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 46.

<sup>95</sup> F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'D', 1912, GA, FWH, D12912/6/2, fol. 14.



This event also brought Harvey close to his own death, as he could easily have lost his hand-to-hand struggle. He had always been highly strung, as seen when he abandoned his life in Chesterfield. The strains of combat probably began to tell on him as well; this near-miss would have added considerable stress. However, in Chesterfield Harvey had felt that he was alone in life, separated from all those he cared about. This was not true at the front; now he had comrades who would provide him with emotional support. It is little wonder that Harvey came to place so much emphasis on the importance of army camaraderie, given that his experience immediately before joining the army was a contrasting period of loneliness and isolation that he found unbearable.

Harvey and Knight were awarded the DCM for their actions on the patrol, a medal given to men in the ranks for valour, and second only to the Victoria Cross. The *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette* took a typically light-hearted view of the incident:

It is a matter for much congratulation that our most industrious contributor, 'F.W.H.', distinguished himself in a conflict, as David did, against a Philistine. The pen may be mightier than the sword: it cannot be said to excel the 'little man's' Kosh.<sup>96</sup>

Harvey and Knight were somewhat dismayed at this award, wondering why they were singled out: 'The other men, Lieuts. Knight and Harvey feel, have not had their share of the "kudos" of the affair', stated a reporter.<sup>97</sup> Regarding the fictionalised version of this event in his novel, Harvey wrote:

As a matter of fact all he got was a decoration [as compared to being killed]. That was ironic enough, for he had on many occasions gone through similar experience – tasted the same emotions – without thanks. But this time it was the case of one or two rival patrols being wiped out.

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<sup>96</sup> Helm, 'Editor's Water Bottle', August 1915, GA, FWH, D12912/8/1/1.

<sup>97</sup> 'With the 1/5<sup>th</sup>', GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 33.

And fortune favoured the British.<sup>98</sup>

He was not too far from the truth. The 1/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters' war diary stated on 26 August 1915 that they were 'awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for consistent good patrolling'.<sup>99</sup> The headquarters clerk making entries into the war diary may have known that Lieutenant Colonel Collett was in fact recognising a continuous pattern of exemplary conduct, but was constrained to cite only one instance in the official award.

The August issue of the *Gazette* was published after the patrol (mentions of the event are contained therein), and one of his poems from that issue, 'Germany', seems to allude to what happened. Harvey wrote that the allies 'together swear [...] To hunt you [Germany] and to beat you down'.<sup>100</sup> He may have been declaring his intent to do just that on the individual level – he did, after all, boast enough about his 'Kosh' to merit mention of it in the *Gazette*. Harvey felt that he had something to prove as a warrior poet. In his novel, Will claims that his decoration, combined with his fame as a poet, would be useful to show people that it was not just those with 'knock-knees and long hair writing verse'.<sup>101</sup> He saw his medal as validation that poets were manly figures capable of fighting well for their cause.

Despite being involved in significant combat operations, Harvey still found time for poetry. The August issue of the *Gazette* showed just how prodigious his production of poetry had become, and why Helm would give so much credit to Harvey for keeping the paper alive. This issue contained ten poems by Harvey alone, which was roughly one-third of the material in the issue

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<sup>98</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 193, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>99</sup> 1/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>100</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Germany', 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, August 1915, GA, FWH, D12912/8/1/1.

<sup>101</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 206, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

and around three-quarters of the poetry. The large amounts of waiting and boredom between action inherent in army life, and especially in trench warfare, were allowing Harvey ample time to write. The positive feedback he had been receiving would also encourage him to produce more.

Harvey was also helping to keep another unit's trench journal alive at this time, although he probably never knew it. On 30 August the second number of *The Listening Post*, the journal of the 7<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Battalion, included a poem titled 'Our MP.' that was a barely-modified version of Harvey's 'Our Portrait Gallery. 1. To P.H.' from the June issue of the 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*.<sup>102</sup> *The Listening Post* plagiarised Harvey's poem, giving him no credit as the original author, and copying it almost word for word with the exceptions of changing Harvey's 'Peter' to 'Albert' and his 'Barton Fair' to 'Vancouver Fair'.<sup>103</sup> There is no evidence to indicate that Harvey ever knew of this, and no previous research seems to have discovered it, either. It certainly would have been unlike the acerbic Chaplain Helm, as editor of the *Gazette*, not to have published a witty rebuff of the Canadians for stealing his journal's copy.

This theft of his poem does prove that Harvey and the *Gazette* were influencing other units' trench papers. The same issue of *The Listening Post* that plagiarised 'To P.H.' also lifted a satirical piece from the *Gazette* titled 'The Private's Litany'.<sup>104</sup> This article parodied litany prayer form: 'From 3 days of fatigue under the name of rest [...] from all things that prolong stand to; from flies; from sentimental songs [...] from trench inspections by staff-officers and

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<sup>102</sup> [F.W. Harvey], 'Our MP', *The Listening Post*, 30 August 1915, FWWAMD; F.W. Harvey, 'Our Portrait Gallery. 1. To P.H.', 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, June 1915, (repr. in *The Fifth Gloster Gazette, 1915-1919*, ed. by Christine Beresford and Christopher Newbould (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd., 1993), p. 11).

<sup>103</sup> [Harvey], 'Our MP', FWWAMD; Harvey, 'To P.H.', p. 11.

<sup>104</sup> 'The Private's Litany', *The Listening Post*, 30 August 1915, FWWAMD; 'The Private's Litany', 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, June 1915, (repr. in *Fifth Gloster Gazette*, ed. by Beresford and Newbould, p. 10).

the Colonel [...] Deliver me!'.<sup>105</sup> The Canadians' version was taken nearly verbatim, with the one major exception of deleting the *Gazette's* line 'from Sergeant Peter Huggins'.<sup>106</sup> Peter Huggins is probably the subject of Harvey's 'To P.H.', an indication that Harvey was also the author of 'The Private's Litany' (no author was attributed in the *Gazette* either).

The 20 October 1915 issue of *The Listening Post* copied another Harvey poem, again from the June issue of the *Gazette*. The poem that they titled 'The 'Uns', was nothing more than a slightly modified version of Harvey's 'To the Patriots of Poplar – and other places where England's honour was upheld by mob law'.<sup>107</sup> The only major changes were to replace Harvey's 'England's foes' with 'Brittains [sic] foes', and to add 'the miple leef fer ever' to the end.<sup>108</sup> Harvey's version of the poem attempts to recreate the Cockney accent of Poplar, although the Canadians modified it to reflect Canadian pronunciation: for example, Harvey's 'alf a brick' became 'half a brick'.<sup>109</sup>

Evidently, the 7<sup>th</sup> Canadians had obtained a copy of the June 1915 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, as all of the items that they copied were from that issue. The physical locations of the units facilitated this transaction. The June issue of the *Gazette* was officially published on the 15<sup>th</sup> of that month.<sup>110</sup> On 24 June an advance party from the 7<sup>th</sup> Canadians entered trenches near the 1/5<sup>th</sup>'s sector at Ploegsteert woods. On the 25<sup>th</sup> the 1/5<sup>th</sup> moved to a rest area in Vieux-Berquin, only 4.5 km from the 7<sup>th</sup> Canadians' rest area at Nuef-Berquin.<sup>111</sup> If the

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<sup>105</sup> 'Litany', 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, p. 10.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.; 'Litany', *The Listening Post*, FWWAMD.

<sup>107</sup> [F.W. Harvey], 'The 'Uns', *The Listening Post*, 20 October 1915, FWWAMD; F.W. Harvey, 'To the Patriots of Poplar – and other places where England's honour was upheld by mob law.', 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, June 1915, (repr. in *Fifth Gloster Gazette*, ed. by Beresford and Newbould, p. 11).

<sup>108</sup> [Harvey], 'The 'Uns', FWWAMD; Harvey, 'Patriots of Poplar', p. 11.

<sup>109</sup> [Harvey], 'The 'Uns', FWWAMD; Harvey, 'Patriots of Poplar', p. 11.

<sup>110</sup> Beresford and Newbould, eds., *Fifth Gloster Gazette*, p. 9.

<sup>111</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Battalion War Diary, 1914-1919, 1919, LAC; 1/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

7<sup>th</sup> Canadians were receiving copies of the 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette* when in relatively-close proximity to the 1/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters, then it is just as likely that other units would too, thus inspiring further trench journals. As the 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*'s influence spread, so too did Harvey's.

Harvey was sent home on leave shortly after being awarded the DCM. He must have arrived in England before 9 September, as his brother Roy, still in training, offered to meet him on that day if he could manage leave himself.<sup>112</sup> In the same letter, Roy mentions that Harvey had been recommended for a commission and encouraged him to take it, if anything for the rest from front-line duty the training would provide.<sup>113</sup> This may indicate that Harvey had confided to his brother of his own weariness at the front line.

Harvey's efforts to overcome his war-weariness, and also the development of a nervous disposition from surviving attempts on his own life, left their mark in his poetry. Although Harvey did not write any poem directly relating to his famous patrol (that would have been too self-congratulatory), he did pen a poem at this time on a similar activity in no-man's-land. 'A True Tale of the Listening Post', which he dedicated to Knight, describes Knight and Harvey conducting the same activity as the Germans they had killed, and wondering if they would be repaid in kind:

Men are queer things right through – whatever make  
But Tommy Atkins really takes the cake.

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Which said, see in your mind (my point to prove)  
Two soldiers, frozen and afraid to move,  
On listening patrol. For four dead hours  
Afraid to move or whisper, cough or sneeze.  
Waiting in wonder whether 'twas the breeze  
Moved in the grass, shaking the frozen flowers  
Just then. Germans were out that night, we knew,  
With bombs to throw, and so we lay, we two,

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<sup>112</sup> Roy Harvey to F.W. Harvey, 7 September 1915, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/28.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

With rifle ready at shoulder and... What's that  
 Twanging the wire (both heard the sound) – a rat?  
 Or the Bosch bomber creeping, creeping nigher  
 To hurl death into the trench behind us? Both  
 Turned barrels 'gainst the unknown, ready to fire,  
 Waiting to fire should it ever take form  
 Of human body. – Waiting, being loath  
 To shoot at nothing, making so alarm  
 And laughter in the trench we guarded. Here  
 Sounds a hoarse whisper against my ear:  
 Something it utters – 'What is it?' I hiss,  
 Soft as a serpent: and upon my oath  
 My comrade covering still the sound, said – this.  
 This, while the unknown stalked, and fear was chilly  
 Like ice around our hearts – 'I say old chap'  
 (My laughter followed like a thunder-clap)  
 'Couldn't I do some beef and piccalilli['].

Men are quaint things, the world over, willy nilly.  
 But R.E.K. – you take the – piccalilli.<sup>114</sup>

Harvey builds tension by describing the fear of not knowing if any sound or movement was benign or a warning of incoming death. His admission that they were 'afraid to whisper, cough or sneeze' is more sinister when one knows – as his comrades would – that the sound of a German coughing had revealed the listening post that he and Knight had destroyed. Harvey was fully aware of the laconic humour needed by soldiers to cope with battlefield conditions. He can hear his comrades laughing in the trench behind him, as they are able to relax somewhat, slightly freed from fear of attack because of the forward warning the listening post provides. This poem, too, was meant to provide them with a light diversion from the reality of life at the front, and to be sure, it was a poem written for soldiers more than the audience at home. It may even be that the dash in the last line 'you take the – piccalilli' was not only meant to highlight the fact that 'cake' does not follow as it did in the second line, but also to indicate where a censor might delete an unprintable word that a soldier – but not more

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<sup>114</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'A True Tale of the Listening Post', *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, September 1915, TJUM.

polite civilian society – might use.

With this poem Harvey also demonstrated that, even with his new-found hero status, he did not take himself too seriously. On seeing the title, the reader might expect the poem to be about Harvey earning his DCM through destruction of an enemy listening post, not a self-deprecating, humorous look at his own fears while manning one. He was comforting other Gloucesters by letting them know that he was prone to the same anxieties as everyone else, despite his recent feats of derring-do. At the same time, he gave an example of how humour can be used to cope with such trepidation. Turning a fear-inducing moment into a joke helped Harvey to cope with his anxieties. It was also a tribute to Knight for having the pluck to make a joke at such a tense time, in order to soothe the nerves of a comrade, setting an example for others to follow.

Another poem possibly resulted from Harvey's DCM-earning patrol, but it was not written by Harvey. It could have been Harvey who inspired Gurney to write one of his most popular poems, 'To the Poet before Battle', which extols the value of courage in combat. Gurney agreed with Harvey's contempt for inactive combat, writing to tell him in 1917 that 'Standing in the mud and waiting is perfectly devilish'.<sup>115</sup> However, unlike Harvey, he did not see the value in chasing danger, also writing that 'I can, now my health is better, face danger with calm, and after a time with even more calm, but do not at all like running into danger. In fact, my courage is chiefly passive, unlike your courage'.<sup>116</sup> Gurney admired Harvey's ability to take initiative in action, and wanted to prove himself to his friend. It was with great pride that he later reported to Harvey:

I wish you could see me now [...] for I am quite a different chap now, and worthier to be your friend. For instance, two Scots boys in the MGC told me they had never seen anyone so cool under fire. That was externally

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<sup>115</sup> Ivor Gurney to F.W. Harvey, [1917], GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/19.

<sup>116</sup> Ivor Gurney to F.W. Harvey, [1917], GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/18.

only, but it was some compliment from those two unusually plucky kids.<sup>117</sup>

Gurney's belief that he must demonstrate courage to be worthy of friendship with Harvey is telling. The poem is believed to have been written in July or August 1915 – at the same time that Harvey was so effectively proving his value as a soldier.<sup>118</sup> This was also around the time when Harvey was beginning to gain a reputation as a poet thanks to his efforts in the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*. Gurney's poem addresses a poet, a title that more appropriately describes Harvey than himself at this point, as Gurney had still only written a few poems. The poem begins with the speaker addressing another person:

Now, youth, the hour of thy dread passion comes;  
Thy lovely things must all be laid away  
And thou, as others, must face the riven day  
[...]  
Remember thy craft's great honour, that they may say  
Nothing in the shame of poets.<sup>119</sup>

Yet the end of the poem shifts to collective pronouns:

then they must know we are,  
For all our skill in words, equal in might  
And strong of mettle as those we honoured.<sup>120</sup>

It is as though Gurney sees himself following Harvey into the calling of the soldier-poet, steeling himself that he might, as Harvey had already done, 'make the name poet terrible in just war'.<sup>121</sup>

Gurney might have felt that his 'passive' courage was worth less than Harvey's more active valour, but Harvey seems to have concluded the opposite. In his novel, Will Harvey's mother discusses Will's courage with his brother,

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<sup>117</sup> Ivor Gurney to F.W. Harvey, 27 December [1917], GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/26. MGC – Machine Gun Corps.

<sup>118</sup> Phillip Lancaster, 'THE MAKING OF A POET: A Scholarly Edition of Ivor Gurney's Poetry, 1907 — Armistice Day 1918' (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Exeter, 2012), pp. 80-81.

<sup>119</sup> Ivor Gurney, *Severn and Somme* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd., 1917), p. 17.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*



Eric. She states that,

there are two kinds of courage. There is the courage of daring – a gay, valiant thing, and lovely to look at. He has got that. He had it as a baby when he would gulp the nastiest medicine with a smile. But there is courage of another kind – a grimmer, less dramatic sort that lies in endurance. Willie can't endure [...] [T]he soul, which is his own, has no – what shall I say? – Hope. I can't explain. But I know. His daring and his gaiety is a sort of brave glitter on despair.<sup>122</sup>

Writing after the war, Harvey recognised that while he could face immediate danger and hardship, he was less able to deal with long-term struggles.

At about the time that Harvey returned to England, Gurney wrote to him from training at Chelmsford, reporting that he had met an old 1/5<sup>th</sup> comrade of Harvey's named Dan, who was back on leave. He described the soldier as a salt-of-the-earth type, of 'simplicity and good nature', who 'likes Harvey the solicitor'.<sup>123</sup> Perhaps the soldier particularly appreciated Harvey's defence of other soldiers at court-martial. Dan may well have summed up the feelings of many working-class soldiers towards their middle-class comrade, saying 'He talks to you so sensible-like. But then he uses some great long educated word or other that quite flummoxes chaps like me'.<sup>124</sup> The soldier also spoke highly of Harvey's contributions to the *Gazette* and informed Gurney that he had heard that Harvey was up for a commission.<sup>125</sup>

Entering the second year of war, it became apparent that the regular army establishment could not supply the amount of officers needed to lead its rapidly-expanding numbers.<sup>126</sup> The army began to fill its officer strength with so-called 'temporary gentlemen' raised from the ranks; particularly attractive were those men who had the middle-class, public-school background that would help

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<sup>122</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', pp. 127-28, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>123</sup> Ivor Gurney to F.W. Harvey, [September 1915], GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/11.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Richard Holmes, *Soldiers – Army Lives and Loyalties from Redcoats to Dusty Warriors* (London: Harper Press, 2011), p. 183.

to socialise them into the officer corps.<sup>127</sup> Harvey and Knight possessed that background; all Colonel Collett needed in order to recommend them for commissions was a testimonial of demonstrated initiative and leadership. The DCM filled this perfectly. Despite Harvey's egalitarian decision to enlist as a common soldier, he would not remain with the ranks. It is worth noting that in *Will Harvey – A Romance*, the character Will remains in the other ranks throughout the war, perhaps an indication that Harvey did not fully embrace the idea of being placed above so many others. However, he must have had some desire to lead, otherwise he could have simply refused the commission.

On 14 October 1915, Knight and Harvey were ordered to attend officer training in England.<sup>128</sup> Although the two men felt that they had received more than their due credit for the actions on the night of 3 August, it is worth noting that two others on that patrol received commissions as well. Lance Corporal K.A. Robertson was ordered to attend officer training with Knight and Harvey, while Lance Corporal Wynter Morgan, leader of the support party, was also commissioned.<sup>129</sup> A 50% commissioning rate for the members of one patrol spoke highly indeed for their actions of that night.

Harvey's commission as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the Territorial Force was signed by King George V on 20 October 1915, backdated effective 18 October.<sup>130</sup> At this time, the Territorial Force internally ran much of their own training for new soldiers and new officers. The 3/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment was the designated training battalion, feeding soldiers into the 1/5<sup>th</sup> and 2/5<sup>th</sup>, as well as providing home defence. Harvey and

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid., pp. 195-96.

<sup>128</sup> Orders for Lance Sergeant R.E. Knight, Lance Corporal F.W. Harvey, and Lance Corporal K.A. Robertson to attend officer training, 14 October 1915, GA, FWH, D12912/7/1.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.; 'With the 1/5<sup>th</sup>', GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 33.

<sup>130</sup> Commission as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the Territorial Force for F.W. Harvey, 20 October 1915, GA, FWH, D12912/7/1.

Knight would be assigned to the 3/5<sup>th</sup> while they attended various officer training courses throughout the army. Harvey continued to send poems to the 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette* from England, beginning immediately on his arrival with his humorous poem 'Triolet (The Crossing)', which described the rough journey across the English Channel in bad weather, and his ensuing sea-sickness.<sup>131</sup> His continued submissions to the *Gazette* from England demonstrate the importance he placed on entertaining his comrades in France, although he probably also knew that it was best to keep getting his work and his name in print to add to his increasing reputation.

At about this time Harvey wrote one of his best and most insightful war poems, titled 'If We Return' in *A Gloucestershire Lad*, but merely 'Rondeau' in the October 1915 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*.<sup>132</sup> Perhaps inspired by his return to England, it offers a serious look at what homecoming would feel like to soldiers after the war, and ponders what veterans' duty to society would be:

If we return, will England be  
 Just England still to you and me?  
 The place where we must earn our bread?  
 We, who have walked among the dead.  
 And watched the smile of agony,

And seen the price of Liberty,  
 Which we have taken carelessly  
 From other hands. Nay, we shall dread,  
 If we return,

Dread lest we hold blood-guiltily  
 The things that men have died to free.  
 Oh, English fields shall blossom red  
 For all the blood that has been shed  
 By men whose guardians are we,  
 If we return.<sup>133</sup>

The poem is multi-faceted, using the rondeau form's refrain to play on various

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<sup>131</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Triolet (The Crossing)', 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, October 1915, TJUM.

<sup>132</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Rondeau [If We Return]', 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, October 1915, TJUM; Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 25.

<sup>133</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 25.

meanings around the central phrase. The refrain 'If we return' begins as one of the foremost thoughts on the soldier's mind: returning home alive. But it holds another meaning besides the physical return of the soldier to England. As the poem continues, Harvey warns that more violence may occur if society returns to the way things were before the war: 'If we return [...] the things that men have died to free' then 'English fields shall blossom red'. Harvey did not wish to see so many die and suffer for the world to simply for a return to the *status quo*, and especially to the conditions that caused the war. It was the veteran's duty to see this through. The veteran cannot simply return to ordinary day-to-day existence and survival, merely earning his bread after 'walking among the dead'; he must instead channel his energies to ensure that the world moves forward for the better. Furthermore, Harvey does not blame the bloodshed on the soldiers. He refers to 'the blood that has been shed / By men whose guardians are we', an allusion to those powerful men who caused the war, and profited by it, while staying safe at home behind the soldiers who guard them. This foreshadows poems that Harvey later wrote criticising war-profiteers.

Harvey believed the war to be justified on the grounds of liberating Belgium. Warning against returning 'the things that men have died to free' may also indicate his opposition to ending the war before Germany gave up claims to conquered territory. The poem also indicates that the seed had been planted in Harvey's mind that would lead him to a political theory that he termed 'A New England'. As the war continued, Harvey began to believe that it would result in a social revolution that would see many of the injustices of the industrial revolution washed away. Harvey and many others hoped that the ruling class would reward the lower classes for coming to the country's defence, and would repay them by ensuring that the UK became a more egalitarian country. The

phrase 'English fields shall blossom red' suggests that the future battlefield will be in England itself if this lesson of the war is not learnt; rather than a peaceful social revolution, England could find itself swept up in civil strife and violence. The colour red had already gained an association with early workers' rights and socialist groups, and Harvey may also have been warning that failure to recognise social inequality could lead to a socialist revolution. This image also alludes to the red poppies which blossomed in the artillery-churned soil of the Western Front, already becoming a symbol of death on the battlefield. (The two most famous uses of poppies, McCrae's 'In Flanders Fields' and Rosenberg's 'Break of Day in the Trenches' would not be written until December 1915 and June 1916 respectively.)<sup>134</sup> Harvey is warning against a future where English fields become battlefields, in either a literal or figurative sense, as they 'blossom red' with poppies symbolising shed blood or revolution.

After the horrors of war, home can never be just home again. Harvey was certainly feeling this during his temporary return. Three further poems were collectively published under the heading 'Leave' in the September 1915 edition of the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*: 'The Soldier speaks [sic]', 'The Awakening', and 'Land of Heart's Delight'.<sup>135</sup> All three were eventually published separately in *A Gloucestershire Lad at Home and Abroad*.<sup>136</sup> They described his emotions at returning home after six months. The end of 'The Soldier Speaks' differs considerably in its treatment of homecoming from 'If We Return':

Though unto me you be austere  
And loveless darling land;  
Though you be cold and hard, my dear,  
And will not understand.  
Yet I have fought and bled for you,  
And by that self-same sign,

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<sup>134</sup> Jon Stallworthy, ed., *The Oxford Book of War Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 136.

<sup>135</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Leave', *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, September 1915, TJUM.

<sup>136</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 23, p. 27, p. 29.

Still must I love you, yearn to you,  
England – how truly mine!<sup>137</sup>

It is not the soldier's inability to see home the same way again after 'walking among the dead' that Harvey ponders here, but instead the inability of those at home to see that the soldier has changed, and to act accordingly and compassionately. The soldier loves his home, even though it will 'be cold and hard' and 'will not understand'. Harvey was evidently apprehensive when returning home, as were so many others who had been changed by combat; perhaps this poem was informed by actual experience with British civilians who knew the war only through newspapers.

Harvey and Knight were lauded as heroes on their return, and at first they were more engaged in public relations and recruiting than in officer training. They were sent to speak at recruitment drives in Cheltenham, with their names printed in large bold letters on event advertisements that highlighted their DCM awards and commissions.<sup>138</sup> No doubt this was meant to entice other young men with the opportunity for such advancement. Harvey was given top billing as a speaker at the events, as the organisers probably recognised his gift at oration, along with his fame not only as a war hero, but as a rising literary star. An editorial in the *Gloucester Echo* urged men to volunteer especially for the 3/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters, as they boasted the quality of 'Lieuts. F.W. Harvey (the gifted F.W.H. of the *Fifth Gloucesters' Gazette*) and R.E. Knight, who, fresh from the field of honour and experience are exceptionally qualified to bring the Reserve up to concert pitch'.<sup>139</sup> The same paper also interviewed the two and

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>138</sup> 'Mass Meeting, Clarence Lamp, Thursday, at 8', unknown publication, [1915], found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'H', GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 42.

<sup>139</sup> 'Join the Fifth Gloucesters', *Gloucestershire Echo*, 1 November 1915, found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'H', GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 31.

published a large article on their experiences.<sup>140</sup> They were invited to a meeting in Gloucester to receive the official congratulations of the mayor and council, who cited them as an example of the quality of men in the Gloucestershire Regiment. When Councillor Langley-Smith expressed his pride that Harvey shared his profession as a solicitor, Harvey quipped that 'a solicitor should make a good soldier because he knows how to charge'.<sup>141</sup> It seems that distance from his former profession had done little to make his heart grow fonder for it. Harvey may have been a bit amused, if somewhat embarrassed, by the attention. The anonymous author of a letter that Harvey later published in *Comrades in Captivity* stated that Harvey was 'most apologetic about his medal when I congratulated him'.<sup>142</sup>

The chronology of Harvey's wartime service is as important to understanding his poetry as it is to understanding his life. Harvey was to remain assigned to the 3/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters in England for close to ten months. Boden's *F.W. Harvey – Soldier, Poet* states that Harvey returned to the 1/5<sup>th</sup> in France from January to April 1916, and attributes his poems 'The Day', 'To His Maid', and 'The Return' to Harvey's sense of impending death while in the trenches.<sup>143</sup> However, the Gloucestershire Regiment's records show that Harvey was not at the Western Front at this time, and never served as an officer with the 1/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters. He was never entered on the officer rolls of the 1/5<sup>th</sup>, nor does the 1/5<sup>th</sup> War Diary record him arriving at or leaving the unit as it did for all

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<sup>140</sup> 'With the 1/5<sup>th</sup>', GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 33.

<sup>141</sup> 'Two of Gloucester's Heroes. Congratulations from the City Council.', unknown publication, [1915], found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'H', GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 30.

<sup>142</sup> F.W. Harvey, *Comrades in Captivity – A Record of Life in Seven German Prison Camps* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd., 1920), p. 65.

<sup>143</sup> Boden, pp. 102-14.

officers.<sup>144</sup> The book also mistakenly states that Eric Harvey was with him in the 1/5<sup>th</sup> at this time and that both were recalled in April 1916 to join the 2/5<sup>th</sup>.<sup>145</sup> The 1/5<sup>th</sup>'s roll of officers and war diary both contradict this, clearly stating that Eric was not assigned to the 1/5<sup>th</sup> until August 1916, directly from the 3/5<sup>th</sup>.<sup>146</sup> Additionally, when Harvey did return in France in July 1916, assigned to the 2/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters, he is recorded as having arrived straight from the 3/5<sup>th</sup> in England.<sup>147</sup> We know, therefore, that the poems Boden attributes to this period were not related to any preparations for an assault, and furthermore, as we have seen, 'The Return' had been written before the war.

One result of Harvey's long stay at home was that he had access to his old papers and notebooks, and began reworking many of his earlier poems for publication in the *Gazette*. In February 1916, he published his updated version of 'The First Spring Day'.<sup>148</sup> Private A.E. Sampson, to whom the poem was (re-)dedicated, had been a member of the patrol that had earned Harvey his DCM.<sup>149</sup> Harvey may have been significantly affected by the death, especially as Sampson had remained to fight while Harvey returned to England. The poem was republished with the express purpose of consoling members of the 1/5<sup>th</sup> still in France with the idea that death was temporary. Harvey did, after all, state in 1912 that the poem was meant to comfort 'those who lived'.<sup>150</sup> In this case there were certain soldiers particularly in need of consolation. Sampson was killed by friendly fire from a 1/5<sup>th</sup> listening post, while returning from a reconnaissance

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<sup>144</sup> Nominal Roll of Officers Who Served in France, Including Italy, between 5 August 1914 and 30 November 1918, 1/5 Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment, SoGM; 1/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>145</sup> Boden, p. 114.

<sup>146</sup> Roll of Officers, 1/5<sup>th</sup>, SoGM; 1/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>147</sup> 2/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment War Diary, 1914-1919, 1920, SoGM.

<sup>148</sup> Harvey, 'First Spring Day', TJUM.

<sup>149</sup> 'Casualties', TJUM.

<sup>150</sup> Scrapbook 'E', GA, FWH, D12912/6/3, fol. 94.



patrol.<sup>151</sup>

Harvey used the poem to reassure those men with the thought that their comrade's death was not permanent, to assuage somewhat their guilt at having killed him. The poem is set in springtime, although Sampson died in November, as Harvey used spring as a device to draw out themes of renewal and rebirth. In death, Sampson would contemplate such things as 'The silver music of the stars / That raineth down so silently', so that 'out of the darkness [he] shall take / and nourish up [his] growing soul'.<sup>152</sup> This makes the dead soldier a seed that is being nurtured in the ground, leading to the last stanza which likens resurrection after death to a springtime renewal:

And then when you awake again  
 (And I have slept a little too)  
 How we shall rise to peace anew  
 An earth – Where every dream is true  
 And nothing is unknown but pain.<sup>153</sup>

The first day of spring is the day of resurrection, when Sampson and his comrades – even those accidentally responsible for his death – would be together again as friends.

Although he was putting old poems to good use, Harvey was also composing new work based on his combat experiences. Published in the *Gazette* in April 1916 was his 'The Orchards, the Sea, and the Guns'.<sup>154</sup> What follows here is the revised version published in *A Gloucestershire Lad*:

Of sounds which haunt me, these  
 Until I die  
 Shall live. First the trees,  
 Swaying and singing in the moonless night.  
 (The wind being wild)  
 And I  
 A wakeful child,

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<sup>151</sup> 1/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>152</sup> Harvey, 'First Spring Day', TJUM.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'The Orchards, the Sea, and the Guns', *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, April 1916, GA, FWH, D12912/8/1/1.

That lay and shivered with a strange delight.

Second – less sweet but thrilling as the first –

The midnight roar  
Of waves upon the shore  
Of Rossall dear:  
The rhythmic surge and burst  
(The gusty rain  
Flung on the pane!)  
I loved to hear.

And now another sound  
Wilder than wind or sea,  
When on the silent night  
I hear resound  
In mad delight  
The guns....  
They bark the whole night through;  
And though I fear,  
Knowing what work they do,  
Somehow I thrill to hear.<sup>155</sup>

In 'The Orchards, the Sea, and the Guns', Harvey uses the poem's structure and rhyme to mimic the three sounds that he will never forget. He first describes wind in the trees 'Swaying and singing in the moonless night', with the sibilance suggestive of rustling leaves. As he makes the transition to the sound of the waves the lines become shorter to imitate the rhythm of waves hitting land: 'The midnight roar / Of waves upon the shore'. The lines shorten slightly more as the speaker states:

I hear resound  
In mad delight  
The guns...

The sound of an artillery section firing is recreated with the two iambs of 'I hear resound'. The line break is the pause between firing and impact. Then two more iambs – 'In mad delight' – create the explosions. Finally, the poem creates the echo often heard following a blast – 'The Guns' – only two syllables as the echo from the first blast is swallowed in the explosions of the second. The wind in the

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<sup>155</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 46.

trees and the waves on the shore are the sounds of nature, and by consecutively building on these the poem makes the guns a force of nature as well. To Harvey, the guns are as uncontrollable as the wind and the waves. He can do nothing but listen to them – being under shell fire leaves one as helpless as one is against nature's fury. That the guns 'bark' animalizes their role in nature, and reminds him that unlike the wind and waves, the guns are not entirely mindless, as they answer to their masters.

In each instance Harvey's speaker is safe from what causes the noise: with the wind, he is 'a wakeful child, / That lay' in bed inside. The waves he hears from inside as well, through 'the pane' of the window that separates him from the outside. He is far away from the effects of the guns, as he hears them only 'on the silent night', implying that he can only hear them when the conditions are quiet enough. Harvey may have been training near the south-east coast of England at this time, and could possibly have heard artillery barrages from across the English Channel. The wind and waves he hears with awe; it is only the guns that he 'fear[s] / knowing what work they do'. Yet, he still 'somehow thrill[s] to hear' them, even though he knows from personal experience what destruction they are creating. He is telling us that there is something about combat and destruction that awakens primal urges in him, just as other forces of nature do.

In April 1916 Harvey was ill with jaundice, as his 'Ballad of Damnable Things' complains in the May 1916 issue of the *Gazette* under the heading 'Sickness and Health'.<sup>156</sup> He was only given three days' rest to recover, but a senior officer told Knight that Harvey could apply for more and 'that being F.W.

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<sup>156</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Sickness and Health', TJUM.

Harvey you would [...] of course get it'.<sup>157</sup> He had gained something akin to celebrity status in the army through his poetry and DCM, which in this case freed him from suspicions of malingering. After his many years of struggling, Harvey was finally coming into his own.

The first two years of the war had been generous to Harvey. Throughout his time in the front lines, through to his DCM award and commission, he enjoyed a growing reputation and fame. From general obscurity before the war, he rose to minor prominence through his poetry's publication in the 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, which was gaining national attention. The *Gazette* provided him with an audience, and he in turn gave the paper a literary prestige that it would not otherwise have claimed. The novelty of a trench newspaper, along with the quality of Harvey's and others' work in it, led to increasing attention from national publications such as the *TLS*. His exploits and subsequent award of the DCM added lustre to his name that would increase his standing in the army, and it would also serve to promote his literary ambitions. By the summer of 1916, this increasing fame and prestige would led to the realisation of his greatest dream.

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<sup>157</sup> R.E. Knight to F.W. Harvey, [April 1916], GA, FWH, D12912/1/3/3.

### Chapter III: Gloucestershire Lad

April 1916 – August 1916

The recognition that Harvey received on account of his efforts in the 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette* and his military exploits eventually resulted in the publication by Sidgwick & Jackson of his first poetry collection. The firm had already established a market in war poetry as the publisher of Rupert Brooke. Having seen Harvey's poems from the *Gazette* featured prominently in articles by national periodicals, they no doubt considered him to be an appropriate addition to their ranks of soldier-poets. His best poems from the *Gazette* would be collected and published as *A Gloucestershire Lad at Home and Abroad* in September 1916.

Little documentation survives to tell us how this collection was compiled, aside from a few papers now held in the Sidgwick & Jackson collection in the Bodleian Library. Harvey was training at Windmill Camp near Andover through June to mid-July 1916 when much of the early work of preparing the collection was done.<sup>1</sup> On 16 June the publishers sent Harvey the Memorandum of Agreement for the book, which he signed the next day.<sup>2</sup> Harvey was able to correct the proofs himself, receiving and returning them just a few days before his departure to the front.<sup>3</sup> It was fortunate that he had his chance to see the proofs, as the publishers had forgotten to include the collection's most enduring poem, 'In Flanders'. To compensate for their error, they added the poem to the front of the collection, in italics, 'as a kind of introduction or key-note'.<sup>4</sup> After

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<sup>1</sup> Sidgwick & Jackson to F.W. Harvey, 16 June 1916, Bod., S&J, MS. 37; Sidgwick & Jackson to F.W. Harvey, 20 June 1916, Bod., S&J, MS. 37; Sidgwick & Jackson to F.W. Harvey, 22 June 1916, Bod., S&J, MS. 37; Sidgwick & Jackson to F.W. Harvey, 12 July 1916, Bod., S&J, MS. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Sidgwick & Jackson to Harvey, 16 June 1916, Bod., S&J, MS. 37; Memorandum of Agreement between F.W. Harvey and Sidgwick & Jackson, 17 June 1916, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/2.

<sup>3</sup> Sidgwick & Jackson to Harvey, 12 July 1916, Bod., S&J, MS. 37; Sidgwick & Jackson to Edith Harvey, 17 July 1916, Bod., S&J, MS. 37.

<sup>4</sup> Sidgwick & Jackson to Edith Harvey, 17 July 1916, Bod., S&J, MS. 37.

Harvey's departure, his cousin Edith handled the rest of the publication process for him.<sup>5</sup>

The contents of the book itself are telling. All but two of the forty-four verse poems in the collection had been originally printed in the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*. In addition to these, the collection also contains thirteen prose poems, none of which appeared in the *Gazette*. The publishers probably approached Harvey with the idea of re-printing his best work from the *Gazette* in one volume, a shrewd plan to sell to the public poetry that had already proved successful. (Townsend's biography claims that the poems in the collection were written while Harvey was a POW, simultaneously with the poems in *Gloucestershire Friends*, based on the fact that the collection was released after his capture; she also claims that poems were 'indiscriminately' selected for publishing between the two volumes – this is all untrue).<sup>6</sup> Of the poems published in both the *Gazette* and *A Gloucestershire Lad*, two appeared in the July issue of the *Gazette*, after the signing of the contract in June: 'Wonders' and 'Dying in Spring'.<sup>7</sup> 'Song of the Road' and 'Gratitude', were the only verse poems published in the collection without having ever appeared in the *Gazette*. With these two verse poems plus the prose poems as exceptions, the collection was nothing more than a reprinting of previously published work. The prose poems may have been included to reach out to a more modern audience, as well as to add some content that was not already available in copies of the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*. Correspondence from the publishers reveals that all but one of the prose poems were dated '1913' by Harvey, joining the list of pre-war

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Townsend, p. 43.

<sup>7</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Wonders', *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, July 1916, TJUM; F.W. Harvey, 'Dying in Spring', *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, July 1916, TJUM.

poems that he reused during the war.<sup>8</sup> The preface for the collection was written not by any literary authority, but instead by Harvey's former commander, Lieutenant Colonel Collett, no doubt to add authenticity to the front-line experiences described in the collection.

*A Gloucestershire Lad* was to remain Harvey's most successful collection, going into six impressions.<sup>9</sup> Interest was created not just by the quality of his poetry, but by the fact that it was written in the trenches, and published in a journal created in the same trenches. In a very short time, trench journals had unexpectedly developed large secondary readerships on the home front, giving soldiers a voice with a national audience.<sup>10</sup> Reviewers would emphasise the novelties of the trench newspaper and Harvey's DCM almost as much as they discussed his poetic ability. A short review of the collection in the September 1916 *TLS* reinforces the value of selling material previously published in a trench newspaper, noting that the poems were largely written at the front for the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette* and were 'well worth collecting in the present form'.<sup>11</sup> The review emphasised that the poems were mainly 'light', especially in treatment of the war, quoting Collett's statement in the preface which noted the general absence of 'mud, blood, and khaki'.<sup>12</sup> *The Spectator's* review was almost identical.<sup>13</sup> E.B. Osborn's review in the *Morning Post* (reprinted in the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*) began by first establishing that Harvey was 'the "F.W.H." of the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, the first journal ever published from the British trenches, and unsurpassed for literary merit by any of its

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<sup>8</sup> Sidgwick & Jackson to Edith Harvey, 7 June 1916, Bod., S&J, MS. 37.

<sup>9</sup> F.W. Harvey, *In Pillowell Woods and Other Poems* (Lydney, Gloucestershire: Frank H. Harris, 1926), p. i.

<sup>10</sup> Seal, *Soldier's Press*, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> 'A Gloucestershire Lad', in 'List of New Books and Reprints', *TLS*, 14 September 1916, p. 442, TLSHA.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> 'Recent War Poetry', *The Spectator*, 20 January 1917, pp. 19-20 (p. 19), SA.

younger rivals'.<sup>14</sup> It then went on to cite his DCM and commission as proof of what the reviewer called his 'brilliant aptitude for the vocation of arms'.<sup>15</sup> Only after establishing these credentials did Osborn go on to praise the poetry itself. Harvey's reputation certainly influenced reviewers, and sales as well, exactly as the publishers had hoped.

A more publicly-marketable soldier-poet could hardly have been wished for, and the publishers knew it. In October 1916, the firm published what they called 'an Anthology-Catalogue' titled *A Selection of Poems from recent volumes published by Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd.*<sup>16</sup> Containing work by many of their poets, it was both an advertisement and an anthology in its own right. Below some selections they placed quotations from reviews of the poets' work, or touted how many editions their collections had sold (such as Rupert Brooke's astonishing sixteen editions in less than two years since publication of *1914 and Other Poems*).<sup>17</sup> In Harvey's case, they put a short description of his history with the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, and of his receipt of the DCM.<sup>18</sup>

Harvey himself recognised these factors in his novel *Will Harvey – A Romance*. The latter half of the novel has his character, Will, home on leave following receipt of a decoration. Will tells his mother that many of his poems from the *Gazette* that were actually written before the war were now gaining acclaim from 'the same English papers and magazines which formerly refused them'.<sup>19</sup> He then surprises his mother by informing her that his poems were to

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<sup>14</sup> E.B. Osborn, 'A Gloucestershire Lad' (reprinted from *The Morning Post*), *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, October 1916, GA, FWH, D12912/8/1/1.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *A Selection of Poems from recent volumes published by Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd.* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd., 1916), p. 2.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>19</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 205, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.



be published 'by a very well known firm'.<sup>20</sup> Will found it hypocritical that editors who had formerly rejected his work would scramble to publish it now that he and other soldier-poets were *en vogue*. He credited his commendation as extra incentive for publishers to promote him, but claimed 'They don't care for poetry any more than they care for bravery. What they want is sensation'.<sup>21</sup>

Nevertheless, however much he looked down on those publishers, he still took advantage of their offer. Will claims that he saw it as his chance to 'drive in a blow for my England [meaning his ideal of patriotic English poetry] while the Philistines' guard is down'.<sup>22</sup> His mother, ever the calmer voice of reason in this novel, tells him 'I think you have come into your own. If this horrible war has allowed it (as you say) then I have one single cause for blessing it'.<sup>23</sup> Although providing a fictionalised account, the words stand as Harvey's acknowledgement that he owed the war and the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette* for Sidgwick & Jackson's interest in publishing his work. He may have been disappointed to find himself depending on 'sensation' rather than pure literary ability to gain his fame, but he knew to take the opportunity when it was offered.

As the collection's title suggested, the poetry inside would reflect the influence of A.E. Housman's *A Shropshire Lad*. Harvey said later in 1921 that '*A Gloucestershire Lad* would probably never have been born, had it not been for another lad, and better, from Shropshire'.<sup>24</sup> But this was not the first time a connection had been drawn between Harvey's poetry and Housman's through a title. Three of Harvey's poems in the March 1916 issue of the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette* were grouped under the heading 'A Gloucestershire Lad': 'The Day',

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 206.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 207.

<sup>24</sup> Townsend, p. 52.

'To His Maid', and 'The Return'.<sup>25</sup> Harvey probably chose the title to indicate that these three poems were written in homage to Housman, without at this stage realising that it would name his first collection. *A Shropshire Lad* held significant popularity among soldiers, giving Harvey a good reason to pay homage to Housman in the *Gazette*.<sup>26</sup>

Harvey's poetry reflected Housman's in more than just the title. 'The Return' – a pre-war poem, as previously noted – featured in both the *Gazette* and in *A Gloucestershire Lad*, and exemplifies Housman's influence on Harvey. It is written in the abab rhyme scheme famously associated with *A Shropshire Lad*, and is on the theme of young death and loss that is also prevalent in Housman's collection. *A Shropshire Lad* I, ('1887'), speaks of local lads gone to war from 'the fields that bred them brave', although unfortunately 'The saviours come not home to-night: / Themselves they could not save'.<sup>27</sup> Instead, on tombstones in foreign lands,

Shropshire names are read  
And the Nile spills his overflow  
Beside the Severn's dead.<sup>28</sup>

Harvey's 'The Return' seems to insist that death is not enough to keep the brave young dead from returning:

The unimaginable hour  
That folds away our joys and pain  
Holds not the spirit in its power.  
Therefore I shall come home again  
(Wherever my poor body lies).<sup>29</sup>

Harvey's poem comforts those grieving at home with the thought that the dead

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<sup>25</sup> Harvey, 'A Gloucestershire Lad.', D12912/8/1/1.

<sup>26</sup> Richard Graves, *A.E. Housman – The Scholar-Poet* (London and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1979), pp. 174-75.

<sup>27</sup> Housman, p. 2.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 28.

soldier's spirit will

whisper in the summer trees  
Upon a lazy fall and rise  
Of wind.<sup>30</sup>

This is reminiscent of *A Shropshire Lad* XXXVIII ('The winds out of the west land blow') which speaks of long-lost friends whose 'voices, dying as they fly, / Thick on the wind are sown'.<sup>31</sup> Harvey's voice is similar here to Housman's: plain, sparse language, sparing in use of adjectives and adverbs.

Both *A Shropshire Lad* and *A Gloucestershire Lad* connect the people of their respective counties to the landscapes of the counties themselves, particularly through pastoral imagery. For instance, in Harvey's 'In Flanders' the homesick voice recalls 'The blue high blade of Cotswold' to remember his distant home, while the next poem in the collection, 'Song of Gloucestershire', asks the reader to remember 'Forest and vale and high blue hill'.<sup>32</sup> These echo the recollection of 'those blue remembered hills' of the speaker's 'far country' in *A Shropshire Lad* XL ('Into my heart an air that kills').<sup>33</sup>

In *Will Harvey – A Romance*, Harvey indicated that war-induced patriotism caused publishers to seize upon his Housman-influenced idealisation of the English countryside: 'To be passionately fond of England is a literary virtue in war-time, but so provincial in peace!'<sup>34</sup> He believed that his publishers and the public were especially interested in such poetry at time of war. In this section of his novel Will even goes so far as to state that men were fighting for 'this England of quiet lives, and misty orchards'.<sup>35</sup> He cannot believe that they

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Housman, p. 55.

<sup>32</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup> Housman, p. 57.

<sup>34</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 205, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

would 'risk life for that other fretful, profiteering, foolish, feverish place'.<sup>36</sup> The distrust of industrial England is also found in Housman, as his exiled provincial in *A Shropshire Lad* LI ('Loitering with a vacant eye') describes Londoners as 'that endless line / Of men whose thoughts are not as mine'.<sup>37</sup> Harvey may have come to identify with this poem during his unhappy time living in London, preserving it in his mind as an influence on future work.

Harvey's 'A Gloucestershire Wish at Eastertide' shows Housman's influence more than any other poem in *A Gloucestershire Lad*. It specifically borrows from *A Shropshire Lad* III ('The Recruit'), and from XXXVII ('As through the wild green hills of Wyre'). All three poems are written as a farewell to the men of their respective lands, who were going forth to some adventure. 'The Recruit' specifically wishes the men luck as they go to war; *A Shropshire Lad* XXXVII sees the men off from Shropshire to London; 'A Gloucestershire Wish' gives no specific destination, only implying that the men have left.<sup>38</sup> However, a copy of the poem found in Harvey's papers makes it clear that the poem is sending away soldiers, as it has the variant title 'Luck to you, Glo'sters'.<sup>39</sup> 'Glo'sters' (or 'Gloucesters'/'Gloststers') was typically used only for men of the Gloucestershire Regiment, and not generally for citizens of the county.

'A Gloucestershire Wish at Eastertide' begins 'Here's luck my lads, while Birdlip Hill is steep: – / – As long as Cotswold's high or Severn's deep', echoing *A Shropshire Lad* XXXVII ('As through the wild green hills of Wyre') which states 'Luck, my lads, be with you still / By falling stream and standing hill'.<sup>40</sup> Harvey's poem simply gives proper names to Housman's stream and hill. Both

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Housman, p. 78.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, pp. 4-6, pp. 53-54; Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 6.

<sup>39</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Luck to You, Glo'sters' (poem typescript), GA, FWH, D12912/3/1/16/20.

<sup>40</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 6; Housman, p. 54.

poems allude to the scenery of the local countryside, as if the immovable terrain were an anchor for the wandering men's fortunes. They also invoke spiritual protection for the men by tying their luck to the local places of worship.

Housman's 'The Recruit' states: 'And go, and luck go with you / While Ludlow tower shall stand'.<sup>41</sup> Harvey's poem similarly declares, 'Our prayers go up to bless you where you lie, / While Gloucester tower stands up against the sky'.<sup>42</sup>

The atheist Housman was wont to avoid direct religious references and alluded only to luck, but Catholic-convert Harvey did not hesitate to bring religion into his poetry, linking the tower to the people's prayers. Both poems make the luck or prayers conditional on the standing of these consecrated towers, indicating not only that the men receive some mystic protection through the spiritual forces that these monuments represent, but also that these towers will still stand for the goodness of the homeland while the land has men prepared to fight for it. This, in turn, tells the men that it is their duty to protect these figurative towers that represent their home's values.

The appearance of these churches (St Laurence Church, Ludlow, and Gloucester Cathedral) makes Harvey's reasons for borrowing Housman's imagery even more apparent. They are strikingly similar in design, and both dominate their surrounding terrain, as each is built in the middle of a flat plain, ringed by distant hills. At the time these poems were written, prior to the vertical constructions of the mid-to-late twentieth century, church towers would have been seen as dominating and ever-present features of their landscape and communities, representing that which the soldiers must protect. The publishers found this image strong enough that a drawing of Gloucester Cathedral's tower

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<sup>41</sup> Housman, p. 4.

<sup>42</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 6.

was chosen as the cover illustration for *A Gloucestershire Lad*. Given the image's strong connection to Housman's 'The Recruit', it is further evidence that the publishers were trying to promote a connection between Harvey's poetry and Housman's.

Housman's influence is visible again in Harvey's 'Song of Minsterworth', which echoes imagery from *A Shropshire Lad* XXXI ('On Wenlock Edge the wood's in trouble'). Both poems are tied to an ancient location – Minsterworth and Wenlock Edge respectively – and both demonstrate that these lands inspired emotional reactions in their first inhabitants that continued to be felt by new generations hundreds of years later. Harvey's poem speaks of the monks whose presence eventually gave Minsterworth its name, while Housman's speaks of the Romans who founded the city of Uricon that once stood near the present town of Wenlock.<sup>43</sup> Although Harvey's poem is jovial and Housman's sombre, both tie the features of the land to the characteristics and emotions of its past and present inhabitants. Housman's poem describes a gale ripping at the trees on Wenlock Edge, and observes that 'the Roman / At yonder heaving hill would stare' at the effects of the destructive wind.<sup>44</sup> The speaker ponders on the fact that in the present day he does the same: 'Then 't was the Roman, now 't is I'.<sup>45</sup> Harvey's poem looks to the medieval past, when 'The monks did pray and chant all day', living off of the livestock they kept 'In Minsterworth – that's Mortune!<sup>46</sup> A footnote to Harvey's poem explains that Mortune was the ancient name for Minsterworth, paralleling Housman's use of the ancient name

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<sup>43</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, pp. 11-12; Housman, pp. 45-46.

<sup>44</sup> Housman, p. 46.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 11.

of Uricon. Harvey also connects the past to the present:

The jovial priests to dust are gone,  
We cannot hear their singing  
But still their merry chorus-song  
From newer lips runs ringing.<sup>47</sup>

For Housman, the gale on Wenlock Edge draws fearful emotions from viewers.

As Shropshire inhabitants of any generation stare at the hilltop trees that absorb the destructive wind, they feel similar tumult in their souls:

There, like the wind through woods in riot,  
Through him the gale of life blew high;  
The tree of man was never quiet.<sup>48</sup>

Harvey demonstrates in his poem that latter-day Minsterworth inhabitants 'drink the sunny air / And see the blossoms drifting', causing them to 'sit and sing the self-same thing' as the monks did there in the past.<sup>49</sup> Both poems argue that the land and its scenery has given the same inspiration to past generations as it does to the present.

In Harvey's poem the line 'While blossom blows and Severn flows' remembers 'And thick on Severn snow the leaves' from Housman's.<sup>50</sup> Both poems use the image of trees shedding their coverings whilst the Severn flows onward, suggesting the changing of the seasons; in the context of these poems drifting leaves and blossoms represent the ever-changing, but also constant, lives of the people of these lands.

It would be untrue to state that *A Gloucestershire Lad* is purely a tribute to *A Shropshire Lad*. It has a voice of its own. Housman's poetry has often been called 'simple' and his work noted for its 'rarity... of complex structures of thought and metaphor or of bold experimentation in diction, meter, or verse-

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>48</sup> Housman, p. 46.

<sup>49</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. 12.

<sup>50</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, pp. 11-12; Housman, p. 45.

form'.<sup>51</sup> It was the fairly uniform tone and style of *A Shropshire Lad* that made it possible for Harvey to write poems that were easily recognisable as pastiche of Housman's. Yet, Harvey published in a wider variety of poetic forms. He was fond of the traditional French forms: *A Gloucestershire Lad* includes two ballades, a rondeau, and two triolets. Harvey also created his own variations. 'In Flanders' exemplifies this, as its fifteen lines with a refrain suggest a rondeau.

Yet it uses a less structured rhyme scheme of Harvey's own invention:

A<sup>1</sup>A<sup>2</sup>abbcaddbbA<sup>1</sup>A<sup>2</sup>aA<sup>2</sup>. The final refrain diverges from the first: 'I'm homesick for my hills again – / My hills again!' becomes

I'm homesick for my hills again –  
My hills again!  
Cotswold or Malvern, sun or rain!  
My hills again!<sup>52</sup>

Harvey emphasises the speaker's homesickness by moving the refrain up two lines from its traditional position in a rondeau, in order to repeat A<sup>2</sup> ('My hills again!') twice, while adding an interjection that exclaims the names of the hills that he wishes to see again, to accentuate his unhappiness.

Harvey's statement that *A Gloucestershire Lad* might never have happened were it not for *A Shropshire Lad* was probably accurate. Although Harvey drew on other styles than Housman's, Housman influenced this collection more than any other poet. In fact, the *Spectator* claimed that it was not until his 1921 collection *Farewell* that Harvey was even able to '[get] away a little from the influence of "The Shropshire Lad"'.<sup>53</sup> Harvey believed that *A Shropshire Lad* had proved the marketability during wartime of the style of poetry that he preferred to write. Each collection makes regular reference to

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<sup>51</sup> Brian Rosebury, 'The Three Disciplines of A.E. Housman's Poetry', *Victorian Poetry*, 21 (1983), 217-28 (217).

<sup>52</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Lad*, p. ix.

<sup>53</sup> 'Poets and Poetry. Farewell.', *The Spectator*, 4 June 1921, p. 21, SA.



warfare and service to the country, although *A Gloucestershire Lad* leans more towards belligerent themes than *A Shropshire Lad*. This reflects the increased influence of the First World War on the general population's lives – and of course Harvey's own – compared to the lesser impact of the late nineteenth-century colonial wars. *A Shropshire Lad* sold slowly at first, but sales increased at the beginning of the Second Boer War, and the First World War saw sales increase by thousands, partly thanks to the *Times* reprinting some of Housman's poems as a broadsheet for the troops.<sup>54</sup> Sidgwick & Jackson would have hoped to see similar success through publication of a wartime homage to *A Shropshire Lad*. *A Gloucestershire Lad* never reached the same level of long-term success as *A Shropshire Lad*, but it did enjoy far higher initial sales, perhaps partly because it appealed to Housman's readers.

### Return to War

The period of Harvey's life that influenced and created *A Gloucestershire Lad* ended when Harvey left England to return to the front. He disembarked to join the 2/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters in France on 19 July 1916, reporting to battalion headquarters on 25 July.<sup>55</sup> During this time, and probably unbeknownst to Harvey until well after arrival at his new unit, R.E. Knight was killed on 22 July while taking part in an attack with 1/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters.<sup>56</sup> Harvey was devastated, and it led him to pen 'To R.E.K. (In Memoriam)'. This poem was published in the next issue of the 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette* in September, and later in *Gloucestershire Friends*:

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<sup>54</sup> Graves, p. 115-16.

<sup>55</sup> Roll of Officers Who Served in France, Including Italy, between 5 August 1914 and 30 November 1918, 2/5 Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment, 1919, SoGM, fol. 5.

<sup>56</sup> 'A Gloucester D.C.M – Death of Lieut. R.E. Knight', unknown publication, [1916], found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'H', GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 56. Townsend states incorrectly in *The Laureate of Gloucestershire* that Knight was killed while serving in the 2/5<sup>th</sup> with Harvey (pp. 30-31).

Dear, rash, warm-hearted friend.  
 So careless of the end,  
 So worldly-foolish so divinely-wise,  
 Who, caring not one jot  
 For place, gave all you'd got  
 To help your lesser fellow-men to rise.

Swift-footed, fleeter yet  
 Of heart. Swift to forget  
 The petty spite that life or men could show you;  
 Your last long race is won,  
 But beyond the sound of gun  
 You laugh and help men onward—if I know you.

Oh still you laugh, and walk,  
 And sing and frankly talk  
 (To angels) of the matters that amused you  
 In this bitter-sweet of life,  
 And we who keep its strife  
 Take comfort in the thought how God has used you.<sup>57</sup>

The reference to Knight having 'help[ed] lesser fellow men to rise' remembers that Knight was the leader of the patrol that led to Harvey's DCM, and commissions for three members of the patrol aside from himself. Knight also served as a mentor to Harvey, offering career advice while they were in officer training.<sup>58</sup> Harvey was suffering the loss of role-model as well as a friend, and he reverted to his default state of mind: melancholic, now tempered with anger.

The elegy's middle stanza concentrates on themes of foot-racing, reflecting Knight's known abilities, he having been a cross-country runner at Oxford.<sup>59</sup> Athletic ability was always something Harvey admired and praised, another reason why he looked up to Knight. However, this concentration on Knight's running abilities also shows the influence of Housman. *A Shropshire Lad* XIX ('To an Athlete Dying Young'), one of the collection's best known poems, is also about a runner. Both poems compare the runner's death to a last

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<sup>57</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'In Memoriam. Second Lieutenant R.E. Knight, D.C.M.', *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*, September 1916, TJUM.

<sup>58</sup> Knight to Harvey, [Apr. 1916], GA, FWH, D12912/1/3/3.

<sup>59</sup> 'Death of Lieut. R.E. Knight', GA, FWH, D12912/6/6, fol. 56

race. Housman tells the dead runner that most athletes are soon outrun by renown and forgotten, but by dying young he can 'set, before its echoes fade, / The fleet foot on the sill of shade' and in effect beat renown by dying in his prime.<sup>60</sup> Harvey's poem similarly states that Knight has outrun 'The petty spite that life or men could show you' by dying a young hero, and thus his 'last long race is won'.

In the final stanza, Harvey turns to religion for comfort, a sharp contrast from Housman's secularism. His faith reassures him that Knight was now in heaven, and that his death was the result of his being used as God's instrument on earth. Confidence that Knight's death was part of God's plan indicates Harvey's continuing belief in the justness of the Allied cause. Even after his experience in the trenches, and now the loss of a friend and mentor, he had not resigned himself to the view that British soldiers' deaths were useless or futile. Still, Knight was the closest friend that Harvey had lost up to this point in the war. That his death adversely affected Harvey's mental health can be seen in the one other poem which he sent to the *Gazette* at this time, the melancholic 'The Horses', which focuses on the death of Harvey's father and the subsequent loss of his family's horses.<sup>61</sup> Losses of one kind or another became the prevalent thought on his mind, probably compounded by homesickness beginning to set in after leaving England.

The 2/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters war diary does not show Harvey immediately assigned to a company. The unit had received an influx of new lieutenants prior to his arrival, so it is likely that all platoon-command billets were full.<sup>62</sup> It is possible that Harvey spent the initial days of his return to the front being held at

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<sup>60</sup> Housman, pp. 26-27.

<sup>61</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'The Horses', 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, September 1916, TJUM.

<sup>62</sup> 2/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

battalion headquarters until needed to replace a casualty. This waiting may have afforded him some time to spend with Ivor Gurney, who was a private in the same battalion. Harvey would not wait long for an assignment, as the 2/5<sup>th</sup> suffered a spate of losses amongst junior officers in the following weeks.<sup>63</sup> Overnight on 27-28 July the battalion – particularly A Company – received three attacks by German infantry intent on capturing the ‘Duck’s Bill Crater’, a depression in no-man’s-land that was connected by a sap to the battalion’s main trenches and being used as a listening post. Noted as a particularly ferocious fight, it resulted in one officer and three men killed, with fifteen more men wounded, and led to two Military Crosses (MC), two DCMs, and six Military Medals awarded.<sup>64</sup> Harvey seems to have been involved in the fight, as a 2/5<sup>th</sup> comrade wrote to him after the war stating that ‘I haven’t seen you since Ducks [sic] Bill Crater times,’ while a German intelligence report states that Harvey was with A Company at this time.<sup>65</sup>

From 15-16 August 1916 the 2/5<sup>th</sup> relieved 2/1 Ox and Bucks on the line near Fauquissart.<sup>66</sup> Harvey stated that the first day and night were given to trench consolidation, while the second night consisted of reconnaissance patrols to gain familiarity with the area.<sup>67</sup> Secret orders were received by the 2/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters on the 16<sup>th</sup> for a planned attack on their front in the next few days, based on intelligence that the German defences in the area were thinly

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<sup>63</sup> 2/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>64</sup> A.F. Barnes, *The Story of the 2/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment 1914-1918* (Gloucester: The Crypt House Press Ltd., 1930), pp. 44-45. This book’s dedication contains a poem by Harvey.

<sup>65</sup> Herbert Davis to F.W. Harvey, 25 July 1920, GA, FWH, D12912/1/3/19; Statement of 61<sup>st</sup> Division Lieutenant Harvey – German Intelligence Report, 19 August 1916, BHK, AOK 6, Bund 375, Nachrichtendienst.

<sup>66</sup> 2/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>67</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 2-3.

held owing to movement of their troops to the Somme.<sup>68</sup>

Planning for the attack would require an increase in reconnaissance patrols. Harvey was ordered to lead a patrol the night of the 16<sup>th</sup>, and decided that he would go over the ground himself first, a procedure which (he claimed) he usually practised, and which was especially important this time as the 2/5<sup>th</sup>'s soldiers were still relatively inexperienced.<sup>69</sup> His plan was to go out alone in the afternoon hours, knowing that this was the time when most soldiers, aside from sentries, would be asleep. He also personally believed that the German first-line trenches in the sector were weakly held – indicating that he had been briefed on recent intelligence reports. He claimed that he had tacit – but not official – approval from the battalion commander to conduct this solo patrol.<sup>70</sup>

Harvey's company commander and the other officers of his company were away when he decided to execute his plan, so he informed a corporal, who warned the sentries and replaced the wire behind him as he slipped over the parapet and into no-man's-land.<sup>71</sup> One of his sergeants later related that Harvey had left a note in his dugout, placed conspicuously next to a partially-consumed whisky bottle, stating 'Gone over to catch a German'.<sup>72</sup> It is possible that Harvey had been drinking prior to this solo patrol, and was acting under the influence of alcohol. It would certainly help to explain such a rash act. That his stated plan was to 'catch a German' rather than look over the ground is perhaps more telling. He was still feeling the loss of Knight, a man whom he admired for bravery and audacity in action. In a whisky-fuelled temper, he may have been looking for the opportunity to exact personal revenge on the Germans, killing or

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<sup>68</sup> 2/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>69</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 3.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 5-7.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>72</sup> Townsend, p. 32.

capturing an isolated sentry on a sparsely-held front. He later wrote that he was simply planning a reconnaissance rather than a kill or capture mission, but this may reflect his reluctance to talk about the violent aspects of his war service, just as he avoided speaking of killing Germans in his interview after earning the DCM. It was not uncommon during this war for junior officers to embark on solo feats of derring-do in enemy trenches: Siegfried Sassoon's 'Mad Jack' escapades included, in at least one occasion, the hope of vengeance-kills for the death of his comrade David Thomas.<sup>73</sup>

Lieutenant Jack Fielding, a Royal Artillery officer from Gloucester who knew Harvey, suspected the same, as seen recorded in correspondence recently discovered by his descendants. Fielding had heard of Harvey's disappearance from a mutual friend in the 6<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters. He retold the story in a letter to his father:

[A friend] tells me that when Harvey heard of Knight's death, he was so cut up, that he filled his pockets with bombs, got permission from the Colonel, & went over to the german [sic] lines in broad daylight – how he did it without being killed I can't imagine – & didn't come back. Whether or not he used the bombs I don't know. Of course it was an absolutely mad trick but very typical of Harvey.<sup>74</sup>

The rumour that Harvey's solo patrol had approval from his battalion commander lends credibility to Harvey's claim of unofficial approval. A commander would probably not give official sanction to such an action, but he might indicate willingness to turn a blind eye. More importantly, Fielding and his friend both knew Harvey as a soldier, and both thought it probable that he was seeking revenge for Knight in an act of bravado that would be 'typical'. Furthermore, Knight's death could have triggered one of those bouts of extreme

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<sup>73</sup> Max Egremont, *Siegfried Sassoon* (London: Picador, 2005), p. 87.

<sup>74</sup> Copy of letter from John (Jack) Fielding to John Fielding, 1 October 1916, GA, Fielding Family of Broadground, Upton St Leonards Collection, D12131, Accession 13400.

temper that Bishop Frodsham had noted that Harvey was prone to. Regardless of his intentions, Harvey was not of a sound mind when he set out on this patrol.

Having left friendly lines, he crawled through the tall grass, and when that concealment became thin, he waited to listen for enemy activity. He found no evidence of enemy in the area. At this point, as Harvey later said, 'If I had had a man with me I should now have gone back, but I was beginning to be rather pleased with myself, and, there being no other life than mine at stake, I crawled forward out of cover.'<sup>75</sup> He discovered a drainage ditch that ran into the German trenches and crawled along it through a gap in the wire, and then lay beside the trench parapet to listen for the enemy.<sup>76</sup> Had he been intending to bomb the trench as Fielding said, he would have laid his grenades out next to him in preparation at this point. Still, no enemy materialised, so he decided to enter the German trench, later stating in his memoirs that his intention was to steal some item of enemy equipment to use as evidence to assure his inexperienced soldiers that patrolling was not so dangerous, and to ascertain how lightly held the German lines were (he also gave the same reasons for the patrol to the German intelligence officer who interrogated him).<sup>77</sup> However, he may have been hoping to return with a captured sentry – or more likely to leave a dead one, as crossing no-man's land alone in daylight with a prisoner in tow would be suicidal. Harvey had also recently read a newspaper article about an artillery officer who had entered German trenches alone and returned; that officer had capped his exploits by 'putting [the German trench] to a highly improper and

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<sup>75</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 4.

<sup>76</sup> Egremont, p. 4.

<sup>77</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 5-6; German Intelligence Report, BHK, AOK 6, Bund 375, Nachrichtendienst.

insulting use' before returning.<sup>78</sup>

Slipping into the German trench, he found no sign of the enemy at first, but soon thereafter heard footsteps of soldiers approaching. Unable to retreat the way he had entered, he frantically searched for an exit. His short stature was probably a hindrance in attempting to exit without the ladder that would normally be used for the task. Moving away from the approaching Germans, and unable to exit the trench, he attempted to duck into a bunker, only to run into two more Germans who were exiting it at the same time. They immediately grabbed and disarmed him.<sup>79</sup> The German capture report states that they only removed an automatic pistol from him; if he had brought grenades, he may have cached them outside the trench while waiting to bomb the Germans from there (the report also notes that Harvey had trained as a bombing officer).<sup>80</sup> It is possible, too, that Fielding's information about the grenades was simply a soldiers' rumour. One of Harvey's captors looked so much like one of his family's farm labourers that Harvey, despite the threat to his life, laughed in his face, an action that he believed diffused the situation and prevented the Germans from killing him in their excitement.<sup>81</sup>

His comrades back in the 2/5<sup>th</sup>'s trenches had no idea that he had been captured. The battalion quartermaster's list of the personal effects left behind by Harvey states that he was declared missing with the effective date of 16 August 1916.<sup>82</sup> The list is signed and dated 20 August 1916, indicating the date that his unit had given up hope of his return and inventoried his property.<sup>83</sup> The war

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<sup>78</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 5.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>80</sup> German Intelligence Report, BHK, AOK 6, Bund 375, Nachrichtendienst.

<sup>81</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 9.

<sup>82</sup> List of effects left behind by F.W. Harvey at the time of his capture, 20 August 1916, GA, FWH, D12912/7/2.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*



diary officially records him reported missing on 18 August.<sup>84</sup>

Harvey stated of his capture, 'It is a strange thing, but to be made prisoner is undoubtedly the most surprising thing that can happen to a soldier. It is an event which one has never considered, never by any chance anticipated.'<sup>85</sup> Although he was clearly aware of the existence of POWs, on becoming one himself he 'was dumbfounded'.<sup>86</sup>

Discussion of Harvey's psychological state as POW is essential to an understanding his life and works during captivity. Much less research has been done on POW psychology than on combat psychology; Harvey's experience provides some opportunity to redress this neglect. His statement that he had never even considered the possibility of capture before it happened has been shown to be a common thought of men taken prisoner. Psychological studies indicate that most soldiers could easily visualise death or wounding taking them out of the fighting, but capture never seems to have been a possibility in their minds.<sup>87</sup> A report by an American embassy official regarding the state of British prisoners in Germany noted that:

The soldier may picture to himself the discomforts of trench life, the possibility of being wounded, of loss of limb or eyesight; he may have discounted the possibility of death in battle; but, strangely enough, one rarely comes across in the prison camps a prisoner who had ever considered the possibility of being taken captive.<sup>88</sup>

One medical officer in the Second World War, who was himself a POW and wrote a study founded on his and others' experiences, theorised based on his

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<sup>84</sup> 2/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>85</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 7.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> Walter A. Lunden, 'Captivity Psychoses among Prisoners of War', *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 39 (1949), 721-33 (725); A.L. Cochrane, 'Notes on the Psychology of Prisoners of War', *The British Medical Journal*, 4442 (1946), 282-84 (282).

<sup>88</sup> Daniel J. McCarthy, *The Prisoner of War in Germany – The Care and Treatment of the Prisoner of War with a History of the Development of the Principle of Neutral Inspection and Control* (New York: Moffat, Yard and Company, 1917), p. 47.

interviews with other POWs that the idea of capture may be psychologically repressed owing to the perceived dishonour of male-to-male submission.<sup>89</sup>

The surprise of capture leads the new POW to a state that another study has called 'a strange psychological experience which few men have been able to describe'.<sup>90</sup> Harvey was 'dumbfounded' – no more exact description being possible, even for a man gifted with words. Capture causes a shock-like state, in which the prisoner becomes very docile, and follows his captors' commands with little thought or resistance, even though opportunity for escape is generally high at this time. This docile state protects the captive, as the captors' nerves are also at their height at this moment, and any sign of disobedience is likely to be met with extreme force.<sup>91</sup> In *Comrades*, Harvey briefly described his initial captivity as a surreal experience, 'so strange and hasty, so kaleidoscopic, that I hardly realized that I was a prisoner[...] I had talked and acted in a queer dream-world, and all the time, interested but slightly incredulous, stood behind myself'.<sup>92</sup> Prisoners are usually moved to a rear area as quickly as possible; Harvey found himself whisked away in a car behind the trenches to be interrogated by a German intelligence officer.<sup>93</sup> Although in a semi-stupor, he managed to keep his usual dry sense of humour: when asked when he thought the war would end, he replied: 'only with the restoration of common sense in Europe'.<sup>94</sup> At this time prisoners often experience mild feelings of disgrace.<sup>95</sup> Once the interrogations were over he was taken to Douai and placed in solitary confinement, where he began to feel guilt that his family would worry over him,

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<sup>89</sup> Cochrane, 283.

<sup>90</sup> Lunden, 725.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 12.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., pp. 10-11.

<sup>94</sup> German Intelligence Report, BHK, AOK 6, Bund 375, Nachrichtendienst.

<sup>95</sup> Lunden, 725.

and that his comrades might get killed looking for him: 'Again and again, I asked myself if I could in any way have avoided being taken... why did I risk getting into that trench at all?'<sup>96</sup>

During his initial period of imprisonment, he began his first poem of captivity, 'Solitary Confinement'. In *Comrades in Captivity*, Harvey states that he wrote the poem at this time on the inside of a discarded French book that he found in his cell. He also recollected that he had a pocket-sized copy of Shakespeare's sonnets in his coat at the time he was captured, which the Germans let him keep.<sup>97</sup> Perhaps this contained 'Venus and Adonis' as well, as Harvey's poem is written in the same stanza form. The poem offers a surprisingly optimistic outlook on solitary confinement. Although the poet states that 'no mortal comes to visit me today', he finds solace in the light of the rising sun streaming into his cell, the sound of the wind outside, and finally the moonbeams flowing in at the end of the day. This leads him to end with 'Oh, I have had fine visitors today!'<sup>98</sup> Harvey describes how his spirits were lifted by the sound of wind blowing, reminding him of the outside world:

Anon the playful Wind arises, swells  
 Into vague music, and departing, leaves  
 A sense of blue bare heights and tinkling bells,  
 Audible silences which sound achieves  
 Through music, mountain streams, and hinted heather.<sup>99</sup>

The line break at 'swells' pauses the momentum, calming down with 'vague music' and 'departing', words that in their dying fall contrast with 'arises, swells', just as a wind gust rises and dies. Even the enjambment at 'leaves' evokes an image of leaves carried by the breeze. It would be quite an impressive achievement for Harvey to have written this, hastily on scavenged paper, while

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<sup>96</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 13.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>98</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, p. 31.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

still in the shock of having just been captured. Studies show that prisoners tend towards a state of lethargy, stupor, and mild depression in the initial period of captivity when they are awaiting transfer to a permanent camp.<sup>100</sup> Harvey was so depressed at this time that he began to dose himself with morphine that he had carried in his pocket for use in case of wounding.<sup>101</sup> This would only exacerbate the effects of depression.

So it comes as no surprise to find that Harvey did not, in fact, write the poem in nearly such a well-developed state at this time. He implied that he did so in *Comrades in Captivity*, and the published version in *Gloucestershire Friends* is annotated 'Douai, August 20, 1916'.<sup>102</sup> His manuscript draft of *Gloucestershire Friends*, written in a notebook and showing edits to many of those poems, proves otherwise.<sup>103</sup> If Harvey did begin writing the poem on the inside of an old French book in his temporary cell, then he must have copied it from that book to his notebook afterwards. This manuscript version is dated 'Douai, 19/8/16', implying that what was written in the notebook was what he wrote in his cell.<sup>104</sup> However, this draft poem is not the same as would be published. The draft consists of two stanzas, and only the first sestet is legible, as Harvey obscured the second stanza with unrelated notes (see figure III). It reads:

No people came to visit me today  
 Only my foreign guard and the gay sun  
 Who strolled in nonchalantly just to say  
 Good morning and despair not foolish one  
 But quaff this cup of gold wine instead!  
 I drank [and] soon it got into my heart.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Lunden, 726; Cochrane, 282.

<sup>101</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13; Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, p. 31.

<sup>103</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Gloucestershire Friends: Poems from a German Prison Camp' (author's manuscript), 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 2.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

The notebook's version is inchoate; what he wrote just after capture was highly reworked for publication.

This draft stanza's differences from the final, published version gives us insight into Harvey's personal process of developing poems before publishing them. We see that he changed the first line's 'people' to 'mortal' for the final version. This word is much better as it shows that no life form, not even animals or insects, provides company (the guard having been erased from history), yet it still allows for the later personification of the wind, sunshine, and moonshine that follows. They can be 'visitors' but not 'mortal'. In each version the sun speaks to Harvey, but the draft's final three lines (as above) were changed completely in the published version to read:

'Good morrow, and despair not, foolish one!  
But like the tune that comforted King Saul  
Sounds in my brain that sunny madrigal.<sup>106</sup>

The change of 'morning' to the archaic 'morrow' sets the tone for the biblical reference which follows. This improves the draft's image of simply drinking sunshine as if it were wine – a hackneyed metaphor. Instead, Harvey compares himself to King Saul, whose temporary madness was soothed by God's instrument in the form of David's harp. 'Good Morrow' also indicates the poem's debt to John Donne's 'The Good Morrow'. Both poems seek to expand one room into an entire world: for Harvey, hints of nature outside allow him to mentally escape from his cell; for Donne, being with his lover 'makes one little room an everywhere'.<sup>107</sup> Even the structures of the poems are similar. Both are in iambic pentameter, and Harvey's ababcc rhyme scheme is a slightly less

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<sup>106</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, p. 31.

<sup>107</sup> Oscar Williams, ed., *Immortal Poems of the English Language* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1952), p. 82.

complex version of the ababccc used by Donne.

Although Harvey was relatively safe and well in his new captivity, his family and friends had no reassurance other than the lack of a corpse. The latest biography of Harvey states only: 'For several weeks poor Tillie [Matilda Harvey] knew only that her son was "missing", and had no idea that he was alive and well in captivity.'<sup>108</sup> This was written based only on personal recollections of the family, without access to Harvey's papers. However, the documents reveal more. Diplomatic channels were slow; a month after his capture, on 17 September 1916, Matilda Harvey was still unsure of her son's fate. Writing to him only in the hope that he would be found alive, she stated: 'I don't know if you will even get this, but I feel I must write to you dear to tell you again and again – what you know already – how much we all love you and that we are thinking of you and praying all the time.'<sup>109</sup> Reading the family letters, one vicariously feels the sense of relief when his sister Gladys writes on 21 September 1916, almost in stream of consciousness: 'I'm simply up in the air with happiness and delight I can't keep still and I can't move about, all the world's lovely – I love everyone – your dear beautiful letter arrived this morning all from you'.<sup>110</sup> The next day, Matilda wrote of the joy she received from his 'letter (dated 2<sup>nd</sup> of Sept.) telling [of his] safety, and that [he was] being well treated'.<sup>111</sup> She then states that she has already placed 'a standing order for bread to be sent [...] from Switzerland'.<sup>112</sup> The German-provided prisoner rations were barely sufficient to sustain life, as Harvey would soon discover, and it was expected that officers' families would send them food parcels to

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<sup>108</sup> Boden, p. 134.

<sup>109</sup> Matilda Harvey to F.W. Harvey, 17 September 1916, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/31.

<sup>110</sup> Gladys Harvey to F.W. Harvey, 21 September 1916, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/32.

<sup>111</sup> Matilda Harvey to F.W. Harvey, 22 September 1916, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/34.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

supplement their diet. Clearly Matilda had done her research while waiting for word from her son, hoping that he would turn up as a prisoner rather than a casualty.

On or around 29 August, Harvey arrived with a group of prisoners at Gütersloh prison camp, where he received his first letters in captivity. These informed him of the success of *A Gloucestershire Lad*. Matilda's letter of 17 September stated, 'Your book of poems has come out & is such a success, everybody seems to be buying it. Davies [a local bookseller] has one window full of them & says they had taken no end of orders before they could get them from the publishers'.<sup>113</sup> She added that it had received good reviews.<sup>114</sup> By 21 September his cousin Peter wrote to inform him that the clothbound copies had already sold out, 'and good notices are appearing in the papers'.<sup>115</sup> Harvey seems to have expressed scepticism that the reception had been universally good, as on 23 November Peter replied to him that 'I can't find any bad reviews of your book. Sorry!'<sup>116</sup> Peter then stated that *A Gloucestershire Lad* had been mentioned or quoted from in the *Daily Mail*, *Country Life*, and the *TLS*.<sup>117</sup>

Among those most grieved by Harvey's presumed death was Ivor Gurney, who is thought by many to have composed the poem 'To His Love' as a reaction to the event.<sup>118</sup> His first letter to Harvey in captivity seems to indicate that he was almost as proud of Harvey's literary achievement as he was relieved to learn he was alive: 'So you are not toutefini [sic] after all, and will live to reap the harvest of the huge royalties now astonishing your publishers.

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<sup>113</sup> Matilda Harvey to Harvey, 17 Sep. 1916, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/31.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> P[eter] to F.W. Harvey, 21 September 1916, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/35.

<sup>116</sup> P[eter] to F.W. Harvey, 23 November 1916, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/40.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Tim Kendall, ed., *Poetry of the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 260.

(Proud expression!)'.<sup>119</sup> Gurney's review of the collection was candid: he stated that he wished to 'point out the bad grammar that occasionally lends a little interest to the verse'.<sup>120</sup> However, his opinion was generally favourable, and he believed that 'In Flanders' was 'absolutely firstrate [sic]' and that it 'alone would distinguish the book'.<sup>121</sup> Gurney would waste little time before setting the poem to music, doing so while still in the trenches.<sup>122</sup> The setting remains one of Gurney's most famous compositions.

Gurney's letter also added that the *Morning Post* had printed an encouraging review of the collection.<sup>123</sup> In fact, E.B. Osborn's review in the *Morning Post* was the most generous of all, stating that Harvey was 'a poet of power and a subtle distinction', and that *A Gloucestershire Lad* would 'give him a high place in the Sidneian company of soldier-poets'.<sup>124</sup> Receiving such praise from a well-regarded reviewer in a prestigious national periodical was a far cry from Harvey's general obscurity before the war. *A Gloucestershire Lad* would go into its second impression within a month of publication, and its fourth impression within six months of publication.<sup>125</sup> Gurney's belief that Sidgwick & Jackson were 'astonished' by such high sales may indicate that the news of Harvey's disappearance had created publicity that increased sales far above what was expected. The combination of critical praise and good sales encouraged Harvey to continue writing as a prisoner; the next period of his life would result in his collection *Gloucestershire Friends: Poems from a German Prison Camp*.

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<sup>119</sup> Ivor Gurney to F.W. Harvey, [September 1916], GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/14.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Ivor Gurney's Setting of F.W. Harvey's 'In Flanders', [1916-1917], GA, IG, D10500/1/M/2/46/1.

<sup>123</sup> Gurney to Harvey, [Sep. 1916], GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/14.

<sup>124</sup> Osborn, 'A Gloucestershire Lad', GA, FWH, D12912/8/1/1.

<sup>125</sup> 'Sidgwick and Jackson' [advertisement], *TLS*, 22 March 1917, TLSHA.



## Chapter IV: The POW Poet

### August 1916 – August 1917

By the time of Harvey's arrival at Gütersloh the initial shock of captivity was wearing off. He quickly discovered that life in a POW camp, much like that in the trenches, required him to adapt to onerous circumstances. Matters of survival were learned first. Officer prisoners would arrive at their camps tired and hungry, leading to their first lesson in POW life: German-provided prisoner rations were inadequate to sustain a healthy existence. The officers who had preceded Harvey to the camp had already set up a system to support new arrivals, pooling excess from their own packages from home to feed the new prisoners until they began to receive parcels.<sup>1</sup>

With matters of survival settled, the prisoner would begin to explore the society around him. Harvey found that his camp consisted of Russian and French prisoners as well as those from the Commonwealth. These mixed-nationality prisoners were proud of the fact that, despite German attempts to sow discord between them, relations were exceedingly good in the face of their mutual adversary. On arrival, Harvey was approached by Frenchmen and Russians asking if he was interested in giving individual English lessons, while one Russian offered Harvey the use of his deck-chair should he ever want it.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, Harvey also learnt that British officers were treated with a casual disregard by their own countrymen until they had proved themselves, following the Regular Army tradition of new subalterns 'eating [their] way into mess'.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 22-25.

Proving oneself meant demonstrating to the others that you could contribute to the camp's social life. This was essential to fight monotony and to stave off the 'barbed-wire disease' that affected POWs just as 'shell shock' affected those at the front. 'Barbed-wire disease' was the term used at the time to describe the negative psychological state caused by prolonged captivity. As Harvey was aware, one problem facing POWs in the men's camps was forced labour, which in some camps became akin to slavery.<sup>4</sup> However, even forced labour could help to mitigate the psychological damage of captivity. It gave the benefits of physical exercise, and generally occurred beyond the camp's confines, breaking the monotony by allowing the POW to see 'the outside'.<sup>5</sup> Officers' status in the military hierarchy precluded them from performance of forced labour; instead, their problem was an abundance of empty time. The best defence against madness was to keep busy with as many and varied activities as possible. Amateur theatre, concerts, and other artistic pursuits helped to occupy the mind, while organised sporting events filled the need for physical exercise.<sup>6</sup> These activities were the key to maintaining sanity at Gütersloh, where POW society had no place for those who did not contribute.

A POW who was not taken during a mass-surrender arrived at his first camp 'stripped of his reputation, his prestige, and [...] his friends', increasing his feelings of loneliness and powerlessness.<sup>7</sup> Harvey had been a respected figure among the 5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters: he brought honour to the regiment through his DCM, as a leader he shared risk with his men, and as a poet he improved the quality of trench life through entertainment, while further enhancing the reputation of the unit. This would be only hearsay to those in the stockade – he

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>5</sup> Lunden, 730.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 730-31.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 727.

would have to prove himself all over again. Fortunately, Harvey had practice in establishing himself as a popular figure among his peers. From his school-days onwards he had used his passions for literature, music, and sports to this end. Gütersloh already boasted two camp papers, an amateur dramatics society, and committees that ensured a regular rotation of concerts, lectures, and daily sports. Harvey participated in all of these, while also bringing his own unique talent. He quickly earned his official camp title: 'The Poet'.<sup>8</sup> He stated afterwards that,

though my duties were held to include the writing of topical verses to order, and the carrying to their dreadful conclusions half-recollections of George Robey's, I know that never again in this life shall I hold so high and happy a position amid my fellows.<sup>9</sup>

Still, his having been singled out so quickly as 'The Poet' indicates that Harvey's enthusiasm for poetry and literature was above that of his fellow officers. In this respect he was a man apart, who would not have anyone near him who could challenge him or fully understand his art. His best connection to the larger literary world came in the form of letters from Ivor Gurney, who kept him informed of its developments. Gurney was at the front, but he still seems to have regularly received the *TLS*, as well as further news from well-connected friends such as Marion Scott. Two items of news from Gurney were particularly encouraging: Sidgwick & Jackson had published an anthology that placed Harvey among many well-regarded poets (probably *A Selection of Poems from Recent Volumes Published by Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd.*); and E.B. Osborn was planning an anthology of work by soldier-poets that would include Harvey.<sup>10</sup> Gurney must have had inside knowledge, perhaps through his selection for the

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<sup>8</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 25-26.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>10</sup> Gurney to Harvey, [1917], GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/18.

anthology as well, as the *TLS* announcement of Osborn's *The Muse in Arms* did not list potential contributors.<sup>11</sup>

Harvey's capture had prevented him from enjoying the satisfaction of seeing *A Gloucestershire Lad* published. Owing to German restrictions on what books could be sent to POWs at this time, he probably was not even able to receive a copy for the better part of a year or more. The frustration would have been great. This probably added to his disillusionment after the war, as *A Gloucestershire Lad* was the height of his success and fame, yet he missed that recognition through enforced separation from England. Still, the knowledge that his poems were finding further life in anthologies must have been encouraging.

The literary support went both ways, as Harvey also offered critiques of poems by Gurney. The first letter that Gurney received from Harvey in captivity praised his poem 'Serenity'.<sup>12</sup> Harvey did not praise Gurney's poems easily, as Gurney wrote to Harvey: 'You say "Serenity" is the first piece of my verse to get praise from you – it is the third. The sonnet "The Poet in Battle" [published as 'To the Poet Before Battle'] and "To Certain Comrades" have both gained praise from you.'<sup>13</sup> Gurney evidently respected and craved Harvey's approval. The selections speak of Harvey's ability as a critic too: both 'To Certain Comrades' and (especially) 'To the Poet Before Battle' remain among the best regarded of Gurney's early poems. As it turned out, both were also anthologised alongside Harvey's poems in *The Muse in Arms* later that year.<sup>14</sup>

Gurney was worried that Harvey would find little to 'fire [his] spirit to verse' in prison camp.<sup>15</sup> His unsolicited advice was to 'Work till you feel fit to

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<sup>11</sup> 'War Books for the Spring', *TLS*, 18 January 1917, p. 26, TLSHA.

<sup>12</sup> Ivor Gurney to F.W. Harvey, 31 December [1916], GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/17.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> E.B. Osborn, ed., *The Muse in Arms* (London: John Murray, 1917), pp. 14-5, p. 30, pp. 130-31, pp. 150-52, p. 207, p. 233, p. 238, p. 254.

<sup>15</sup> Gurney to Harvey, 31 Dec. [1916], GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/17.

drop. Write technical exercises for a week, for 4 hours a day; and after that you will find the rust more moveable and your thoughts less stiff'.<sup>16</sup> Gurney missed the companionship and inspiration the two gave each other, observing 'To have written a song or a piece of verse is the best way of intensifying the feeling of communion with you – stronger than with any other'.<sup>17</sup> He recognized that they had very different – and very uncertain – futures ahead, but he hoped that 'there lies before us a hard ground and final recognition in our lifetime that we have done well – very well – by those who are fit to give judgment'.<sup>18</sup> Gurney need not have worried too much about Harvey's desire to find that recognition, or his ability to keep writing. Harvey never stopped writing long enough to need to revert to technical exercises to regain his poetic abilities, as his penning of the rough draft of 'Solitary Confinement' during his first week of capture showed.

### **Creating *Gloucestershire Friends: Poems from a German Prison Camp***

Even with the many POW-organised activities at Gütersloh, free time was abundant. Harvey began a prolific period of literary output. Most mornings after breakfast he could be found sitting in his Russian friend's chair, writing poetry in one of the small gardens kept by the POWs.<sup>19</sup> By mid-May 1917 he had completed the manuscript of *Gloucestershire Friends: Poems from a German Prison Camp*. This work stands as the only collection of the war published while the author was a POW. (Although the publication process for *Sonnets from a Prison Camp* by Archibald Allen Bowman began when he, too, was an officer POW in late 1918, publication was not completed until 1919 after

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 66.

Bowman had returned home.)<sup>20</sup> In itself, this unique circumstance establishes *Gloucestershire Friends*' significance among the literature of confinement. However, its greater importance comes from the fact that it is our best example of First World War POW poetry. Even leaving aside Harvey's superior gifts as a poet, Bowman's poetry deals primarily with the events leading to his capture, and the initial days of his captivity. Harvey's subject is prolonged captivity – arguably the most psychologically damaging aspect of being a POW. Additionally, Harvey's established fame and wide readership meant that his work had the capacity to do for the POW what many others did for the front-line Tommy: give his comrades a voice through verse. He could become a spokesman to help others understand the plight of the POW.

The poems of *Gloucestershire Friends* cover various topics, not only the POW experience. The inside cover of Harvey's manuscript demonstrates that he intended it to be divided by subject into three distinct sections: I. 'Gloucestershire Friends', II. 'In Prison', and III. 'Others'.<sup>21</sup> These, in turn, had sub-sections. According to Harvey's initial plan, the collection would have looked like this:

- I. Gloucestershire Friends
  - 1. Grown-Ups
  - 2. Children
  - 3. [Untitled section containing all other Gloucestershire poems]
- II. In Prison [Alternate title: 'Poems from a German Prison']
  - 1. [All POW poems falling under the 'In Prison' heading]
  - 2. Memories [Alternate title: 'Memories Grave & Gay']
    - i. [All non-POW war poems falling under the 'Memories' heading]
    - ii. In Hospital [Based on Harvey's hospitalisation for jaundice in mid-1916]
- III. Others [Only theoretical, Harvey having assigned no poems under this heading]<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Archibald Allan Bowman, *Sonnets from a Prison Camp* (London: John Lane Company – The Bodley Head, 1919), pp. vii-vi.

<sup>21</sup> Harvey, 'Gloucestershire Friends' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 2.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

Harvey copied out the poems mostly according to this plan. These section titles were discarded prior to publication, with the exception of 'Grown-Ups' and 'Children'.<sup>23</sup> Fifteen of the poems from the sections 'Gloucestershire Friends' and 'Memories' were written before his capture. In the manuscript they are represented only by their title and the words 'as written' on an otherwise blank page.<sup>24</sup> Correspondence indicates that these poems were to be found among copies left with his mother.<sup>25</sup> A few poems are missing altogether from the manuscript, as several pages were later cut out of the notebook; a contents list among the final pages indicates what may have been written there.<sup>26</sup>

The POW poems make the collection unique. They are a testimonial to the crushing psychological pressure that officer POWs experienced, and offered Harvey an outlet for dealing with feelings of guilt, boredom, and helplessness. The guilt grew over time, as Harvey was painfully aware that his comrades – including his two brothers – were still fighting in the front lines, while he was relatively safe in prison camps. In his memoirs he wrote that 'the whole sting of [the POW's] position, that which makes it so intolerable, is [...] his friends and brothers are "out there" killing and being killed. *He* cannot help them. He is futile [...] There is no more terrible reflection for a man'.<sup>27</sup> He further explained that, though many might say that he was a decorated hero who had 'done his bit', a soldier's 'bit' was never done while his country was still at war.<sup>28</sup> This inability to join comrades in fighting was what he called 'the true agony of the prisoner-state'.<sup>29</sup> This guilt coloured many of his poems from *Gloucestershire Friends*.

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<sup>23</sup> Harvey, 'Gloucestershire Friends' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 2; Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, passim.

<sup>24</sup> Harvey, 'Gloucestershire Friends' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 2.

<sup>25</sup> Matilda Harvey to F.W. Harvey, 20 May 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/46.

<sup>26</sup> Harvey, 'Gloucestershire Friends' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 2.

<sup>27</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 27.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

One of these is 'Prisoners':

Comrades of risk and rigour long ago  
 Who have done battle under honour's name,  
 Hoped (living or shot down) some meed of fame,  
 And wooed bright Danger for a thrilling kiss, —  
 Laugh, oh laugh well, that we have come to this!

Laugh, oh laugh loud, all ye who long ago  
 Adventure found in gallant company!  
 Safe in Stagnation, laugh, laugh bitterly.  
 While on this filthiest backwater of Time's flow  
 Drift we and rot, till something set us free!

Laugh like old men with senses atrophied,  
 Heeding no Present, to the Future dead,  
 Nodding quite foolish by the warm fireside  
 And seeing no flame, but only in the red  
 And flickering embers, pictures of the past: —  
 Life like a cinder fading black at last.<sup>30</sup>

The poem addresses Harvey's fellow POWs, who were once fighters – 'Comrades of risk and rigour' – but are now neutralized. It is consistent with POW-psychology theories and with Harvey's previous comments on capture, again asserting that most soldiers envisioned that death or wounding would remove them from the battlefield, as they hope to find fame either 'living or shot down'.

Harvey does not directly state in this published version of the poem that he feels guilt that others are fighting while he is not. However, in his earliest draft, the fourth and fifth lines of the second stanza read 'Here we must wait till others set us free. / Safe in stagnation! Laugh, laugh bitterly!'<sup>31</sup> Harvey knew that his freedom was now conditional on his comrades fighting to defeat the Central Powers. Not only could POWs no longer fight alongside their comrades, but their comrades had to fight on their behalf. This idea of waiting to be set free by others continued in the second draft of his poem, but was eventually edited

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<sup>30</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, p. 17.

<sup>31</sup> Harvey, 'Gloucestershire Friends' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 2.



out completely in his third draft, as the poem was worked into a publishable state.

Another poem written at this time indicates the same guilt. In 'At Afternoon Tea' Harvey uses the triolet form to highlight the emotional distance between those fighting in the trenches, and those who merely hear about the fighting secondhand:

We have taken a trench  
Near Combles, I see,  
Along with the French.  
We have taken a trench.  
(Oh, the bodies, the stench!)  
Won't you have some more tea?  
We have taken a trench  
Near Combles, I see.<sup>32</sup>

The shifting meaning of the repeated lines highlights the fact that the mere statement 'We have taken a trench' does little justice to the violent reality of such an event. The initial observation of having taken a trench is made somewhat lightly, as indicated by the slightly flippant 'I see'. However, the parenthetical statement acknowledging the disturbing aftermath of such an event gives the final two lines a gravity not felt in their appearance in the first two lines. In the final line, 'I see' now implies insight.

This could indicate the distance of senior officers and their staffs from the fighting, or it could represent the removal of civilians in England from the combat they know only through newspapers. The manuscript draft of this poem gives insight into the scenario that Harvey was imagining as he wrote the poem. Notes show that he originally wrote the triolet like a script, with the speakers of the lines indicated in the margin. The location of the trench was also changed. His handwritten copy reads:

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<sup>32</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, p. 44.

Host Speaking: – We've taken a trench  
 Near Ovillers, I see,  
 Along with the French.  
 We've taken a trench  
 myself thinking: – (Oh, the bodies! The stench!) <-- Italics  
 H. Speaking: – Would you have some more tea?  
 We've taken a trench  
 Near Ovillers I see.<sup>33</sup>

Harvey later crossed out these cues (see figure IV). By reading the poem with the cues still in place, we see the poet as a participant in a scene. One possibility is that he is imagining himself home from the front, such as he was during his officer training. In this situation, his host's casual remarks about the capture of the trench are opposed by Harvey's knowledge – which parentheses indicate that he thinks but does not speak – of the truth of what happens when a trench is taken. The 1/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters did attack near Ovillers while he was returning to the front, the very attack in which R.E. Knight was killed.<sup>34</sup> Harvey may have written this poem prior to being captured, and then revised it for *Gloucestershire Friends* while at Gütersloh.

Revisions in the poem's final draft suggest POW guilt. The change from 'Ovillers' to 'Combles' must be inspired by reports that the 1/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters made gains near Combles during the battle of the Somme, shortly after Harvey's capture.<sup>35</sup> While news from the front was officially restricted by the Germans, POWs were able to follow the war by questioning new arrivals. J.A.L. Caunter, a 1<sup>st</sup> Gloucester captured in 1914 who was with Harvey at Crefeld POW camp (where Harvey was transferred in March 1917), stated that officers on parole in the local villages could get the news from villagers who read black-

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<sup>33</sup> Harvey, 'Gloucestershire Friends' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/ Notebook 2.

<sup>34</sup> 1/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

market copies of the *Times* (although his book's publication during the war may indicate that this was actually disinformation).<sup>36</sup> Caunter added that the POWs knew most news even before new arrivals told it to them.<sup>37</sup> The attack near Combles on 27 August 1916 was a huge effort that resulted in the 1/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters capturing a trench along with 30 Germans, and inflicting an estimated 200 casualties, while receiving 17 killed, 86 wounded, and 11 missing – not likely to escape notice even by POWs in Germany.<sup>38</sup> Harvey seems to have changed 'Ovillers' to 'Combles' to reflect that while the fighting continued for those still in the trenches, he and other prisoners were at the liberty to do such things as relax with afternoon tea. This was a daily ritual at Gütersloh, usually held after sporting events.<sup>39</sup> Reading the poem this way, one can imagine an officer POW hosting tea and imparting the news of these gains, initially glad of the victorious information. Yet, the officer internally reflects on the true horror of the event, before continuing to drink his tea, speaking again of the trench's capture with the sombreness brought by personal experience and the guilt of not having participated. The parentheses show that horrific facts need not be stated aloud. The tea-drinkers all know it, and so they continue their tea, trying not to think too deeply on it.

'The Sleepers' hints again at POW guilt. It begins by describing soldiers sleeping in a bombed-out village where 'rest was sweet' despite rain permeating the damaged roofs.<sup>40</sup> Next they sleep in rat-infested dug-outs, outside of which corpses are rotting, 'Yet sleep was sound.'<sup>41</sup> The next stanza begins:

No longer house or dug-out keeping,

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<sup>36</sup> J.A.L. Caunter, *13 Days – The Chronicle of an Escape from a German Prison Camp* (London: G. Bell and Sons Ltd., 1918), p. 31.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>38</sup> 1/5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Reg. War Diary, SoGM.

<sup>39</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 69.

<sup>40</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, p. 37.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

Within a cell  
Of brown and bloody earth they're sleeping.<sup>42</sup>

The word 'cell' at the line break may suggest that now the soldiers are POWs, but the next line reveals that these men are the dead. They 'sleep well' in a 'thrice blessed sleep', knowing they have performed their duty.<sup>43</sup> Yet 'cell' is evocative of punishment for misdeeds, an unusual word for describing the resting place of British heroes. Harvey seems to want to trade his cell for theirs, envying that in their sleep they have found what the poem calls a 'balm of sorrow'.<sup>44</sup> Not only feeling guilt that they are dead while he was captured, he possibly also saw his own confinement as a living death that he was forced to endure rather than sleep peacefully through.

Confinement to an overly-familiar space for an indefinite period of time was damaging. Walter A. Lunden has argued that the conditions suffered by POWs are entirely unique to them. Unlike a criminal prisoner, they have no idea when, if ever, they are to be released.<sup>45</sup> In a matter of a few months, captivity psychosis begins to set in, centring on feelings of futility and hopelessness. This results in an abnormal mental state in which POWs almost obsessively begin 'to divide their thinking in terms of past, present, and future'.<sup>46</sup> Harvey's poem 'Prisoners' exemplifies this process, telling fellow POWs to remember their past glories in arms, before reminding them that they are now 'Heeding no Present, to the Future dead'.<sup>47</sup> The poem breaks the speaker's thoughts down to the same 'past, present' and future' terms described by Lunden. Quoting the poem in his memoirs, J.A.L. Caunter wrote that it 'vividly describes what prison

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Lunden, 722.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 730.

<sup>47</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, p. 17.

means': it is 'a fight against [barbed-wire syndrome] that the prisoner of war is waging'.<sup>48</sup> Harvey's poem shows that he had started down the path of captivity psychosis, or at least recognised it in others. This inevitably led to the extreme depression of 'barbed-wire syndrome' – or, as Harvey would call it, 'green mould'.<sup>49</sup>

'The Hateful Road' is one of the strongest poems of the collection in describing the mental anguish suffered by POWs. The poem begins by describing the scenery outside the prison camp as viewed from within:

Oh Pleasant things there be  
Without this prison yard:  
Fields green, and many a tree  
With shadow on the sward,  
And drifting clouds that pass  
Sailing above the grass<sup>50</sup>

The speaker says that all of these 'lovely things' that he can view give him comfort,

Except the hateful road;  
The road that runs so free  
With many a dip and rise.<sup>51</sup>

The poem's rhyme scheme freezes when describing the road

That waves and beckons me  
And mocks and calls at me  
And will not let me be  
Even when I close my eyes.<sup>52</sup>

The constant torment of captivity and the monotony of days in confinement is conveyed by repetition of the same sound over and over until Harvey's speaker closes his eyes to the road, yet even then its existence still tortures him.

Harvey had planned to use this image of a road to freedom that is denied

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<sup>48</sup> Caunter, p. viii.

<sup>49</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 170.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

to the POW for his cover illustration. He commissioned his POW comrade, Captain Gerald Goddard Jackson, to create a pen-and-ink drawing depicting a road running to the horizon through shadow-casting trees and rolling, grassy hills. This pastoral scene is defaced by rows of barbed wire and a German guard standing between the viewer and the scenery.<sup>53</sup> Harvey must have felt that his poem and the drawing that it inspired represented the paramount problem of the POW's life: the inability simply to leave. That fate even befell the drawing itself. The commandant at Crefeld allowed the manuscript to be mailed, but he disallowed the cover, feeling that the barbs drawn on the wire were oversized and would promote a negative perception of German POW camps. Harvey saved the drawing and later used it as the cover for *Comrades in Captivity*.<sup>54</sup>

After sending home the *Gloucestershire Friends* manuscript in early 1917, Harvey wrote to his mother that 'There really is nothing to say. Life is terribly monotonous – a thing my nature does not easily tolerate'.<sup>55</sup> Boredom and monotony gave the prisoner too much time to think, which compounded psychological problems. Harvey addressed this in 'What We Think Of':

Walking round our cages like the lions at the Zoo,  
We think of things that we have done and things we mean to do:  
Of girls we left behind us, of letters that are due.<sup>56</sup>

The poem musters some encouragement for the prisoners, reminding them that as fighting men they are still 'lions' – albeit caged ones. Still, the speaker does not seem to have fully convinced himself, as he grows more depressed. The

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<sup>53</sup> F.W. Harvey, *Comrades in Captivity – A Record of Life in Seven German Prison Camps*, New Edition (Coleford: Douglas McLean Publishing, 2010), p. 25. The current reprinted edition from Douglas McLean Publishing Limited includes a facsimile of the original cover. The illustration was printed on the dust-jacket on original copies, which is usually lost in archives and libraries.

<sup>54</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 119-20.

<sup>55</sup> F.W. Harvey to Matilda Harvey, 23 May 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/47.

<sup>56</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, p. 16.

next stanza becomes repentant about the past, as he remembers 'deeds we wrought in carelessness for happiness or rue, / And dreams we broke in folly, and seek to build anew'.<sup>57</sup> The tone of regret again reflects feelings of guilt, particularly the mention of 'deeds we wrought in carelessness'. The poem becomes more cynical as it progresses, and simple thoughts of the past quickly evolve into regret for previous actions and missed opportunities. It also illustrates one of the few ways that POWs could pass the time when no organised activities were available: walking around. Harvey recalled that all he and other new arrivals could do for their first few weeks at Gütersloh was to 'wander about the camp, and round and round the wire' while waiting to be accepted into POW society.<sup>58</sup> Men with advanced cases of captivity psychosis might even begin to wander around more, finding it impossible to be still for extended periods of time, even during meals.<sup>59</sup> Walking takes on a more sinister note with this in mind – it is what one does when nothing else is happening and the mind simmers with negative thoughts.

Harvey's poetry written in captivity also reflected on his time as a fighting man. According to the *Gloucestershire Friends* manuscript, 'Sonnet (To One Killed in Action)', 'To the Old Year', 'Ballade No. 1', 'Ballade No. 2', 'The Dead', 'The Sleepers', 'Comrades o' Mine', 'Ballad of Army Pay', 'To the Devil on his Appalling Decadence', and 'A Cricket Match' – all war poems recalling his fighting days – were written while he was a POW.<sup>60</sup> As with his POW poems, some of these may have been written in part to deal with the guilt of no longer being at the front with his comrades. 'To R.E.K.' is the sole war poem included in the collection that was written before his capture. Harvey did intend to

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 22.

<sup>59</sup> Lunden, 731.

<sup>60</sup> Harvey, 'Gloucestershire Friends' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 2.

include his 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette* trench poems 'To Rupert Brooke', 'The Listening Post', 'The Route March', and 'Belgium 1914', but they were all cut during the publication process.<sup>61</sup> Two new poems written after capture – 'The Stranger' and 'The Ballad of Army Pay' – continued in the style of trench journals.<sup>62</sup> As Graham Seal asserts, trench journals had developed into 'a piquant and highly-recognisable genre whose individual titles deployed a number of finite textual and visual elements and elemental rhetorical strategies'.<sup>63</sup> 'The Stranger' and 'The Ballad of Army Pay' would fit neatly into this genre, and their presence in Harvey's manuscript reflects the continued influence of trench culture on his work.

Trench culture had developed its own folklore and legends, one of the more famous being 'The Comrade in White'. This legend developed and spread among Allied soldiers in 1915, claiming that a soldier had been saved from certain battlefield death by a spectral figure who removed him from danger. Afterwards, the soldier would notice stigmata on his saviour, which the figure would claim were old wounds that had reopened.<sup>64</sup> Harvey took this legend and added his own twist to it in 'The Stranger'. Here the messianic figure is dressed in soldier's khaki, although he is still 'so white-faced and wan'.<sup>65</sup> The speaker is caught in an artillery barrage, when The Stranger asks him what he would do differently if he had his life to live again. The speaker replies that he would live 'Kinder to man, truer to God each day', and is then engulfed in explosions.<sup>66</sup> The Stranger smiles, and revealing his Christ-like wounds, whispers a reminder

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid. Titled 'The Listening Post' in his manuscript, it was titled 'A True Tale of the Listening Post' in the September 1915 issue of the 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, as seen earlier.

<sup>62</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, pp. 40-42, pp. 69-70.

<sup>63</sup> Seal, *Soldier's Press*, p. 222.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 53.

<sup>65</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, p. 69.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.



to the speaker of the promise he has made, before falling dead. Harvey does not hesitate to lay the Christian imagery on thickly: the stranger mimics crucifixion by falling 'arms outspread'.<sup>67</sup> The stretcher bearers then arrive to find only the speaker lying in the trench. The speaker states that he will try to live as he promised – but recognises still 'that it is not in my heart to hate the pleasant sins I leave'.<sup>68</sup>

Harvey's changes to the legend indicate his personal beliefs about the war and religion. He chose to clothe the White Comrade in khaki rather than the usual gleaming white attributed to him, and in doing so made the British soldier a messianic figure – a stranger willing to give his life for the reader in Britain. Harvey's retelling also created a much more Catholic version of the tale, reflecting his own conversion. In the legend's usual telling, the speaker is not said to have a conversation with the 'White Comrade', yet in Harvey's version, confession is required before salvation is given, reflecting that Catholic sacrament. His admission that he cannot hate his past sins reflects the Catholic emphasis on original sin, which is believed to make humanity weaker to temptation.

Aside from reflecting Harvey's personal religious feelings, the poem demonstrated the continued influence of the trenches on his work, and connected *Gloucestershire Friends* with that world. Life in trenches had become a separate culture, with its own language, customs, superstitions, and folklore.<sup>69</sup> Poems such as this helped to preserve and spread that society's folklore. The manuscript of *Gloucestershire Friends* shows that the poem was written in POW camps, as the draft contains multiple edits, and is still far from the final version

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 70.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Seal, *Soldier's Press*, p. x.

as published, which seems to have been finished on pages that are now missing. Harvey was still writing poetry reflecting trench culture because his thoughts were with his comrades at the front, and he wanted to continue as a public voice for them.

The trench press did more than just entertain soldiers: it opened a dialogue between them and the home front, through poetry or other literary media.<sup>70</sup> Trench journal contributors knew that those at home read their work, and that it was the home front that prosecuted the war, while the soldiers fought it.<sup>71</sup> These journals became the organ for soldiers to be heard by those in power, and by the public who might pressurise politicians for change.<sup>72</sup> What might seem at first glance to be normal soldiers' gripes were in fact damning social comment, directed homewards. Harvey had used the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette* to send poetic social commentary home before. The *Gazette* was now unavailable to him, but he could take advantage of his publishers in England instead. His 'Ballad of Army Pay' had this goal. On the surface, it complains of the injustice that the infantrymen who took the most risk were paid less than the specialist troops such as artillerymen, signalers, and engineers who spent much less time in the front lines. Its tone and purpose are more consistent with poetry found in trench journals than in a collection. Its subject, tone, and use of fourteen ballad lines also shows the influence of Kipling's *Barrack Room Ballads*, particularly 'Tommy' and 'Shillin' a Day'. At thirty lines, it is one of the lengthiest poems that Harvey ever published. The first two stanzas are representative:

In general, if you want a man to do a dangerous job: –  
Say, swim the Channel, climb St. Paul's, or break into and rob

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 222.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 172.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

The Bank of England, why, you find his wages must be higher  
 Than if you merely wanted him to light the kitchen fire.  
 But in the British Army, it's just the other way.  
 And the maximum of danger means the minimum of pay.

You put some men inside a trench, and call them infantrie [sic],  
 And make them face ten kinds of hell, and face it cheerfully;  
 And live in holes like rats, with other rats, and lice, and toads,  
 And in their leisure time, assist the R.E.'s [sic] with their loads.  
 Then, when they've done it all, you give 'em each a bob a day!  
 For the maximum of danger means the minimum of pay.<sup>73</sup>

The poem is not directed at non-infantry soldiers: the next stanza explains that 'We won't run down the A.S.C., nor yet the R.T.O., / They ration and direct us on the way we've got to go', asserting that the infantry 'couldn't do without 'em'.<sup>74</sup> As fellow soldiers, they are on his side, and he asserts that they, too, will acknowledge this inequality: 'I think they will all say / That the maximum of danger means the minimum of pay'.<sup>75</sup>

The real target is those who profit from the war at no danger to themselves. Harvey attacks munition workers who make 'seventy bob a week' and 'never see a lousy trench nor hear a big shell shriek'; and entertainers who 'sing about the war in high-class music halls / Getting heaps and heaps of money'.<sup>76</sup> Harvey, too, had profited from war-inspired verse through his *Gloucestershire Lad* royalties, but his verse was written from experience gained in the trenches at great personal risk. He drives his point home in the final stanza, wondering 'if it's harder to make big shells at a bench', than it is to endure the shells 'when they're crumping up a trench'.<sup>77</sup> This foreshadows his post-war poetry that would target munition-producing war profiteers.

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<sup>73</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, p. 40. Infantry is misspelled in both Harvey's manuscript and in the final publication. Harvey may have confused it with the French spelling 'infanterie'. R.E. – Royal Engineers. Infantry were often tasked to haul heavy equipment for the engineers and to conduct manual labour under engineer supervision when they were not serving in the trenches.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p. 41. A.S.C. – Army Service Corps; R.T.O. – Railway Transport Officer.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

Entertainers who extol bravery 'at high-class music halls' but know nothing about it in reality are attacked in the poem too: 'I wonder if it's harder to sing in mellow tones / Of danger, than to face it – say in a wood like Trones'.<sup>78</sup> Readers familiar with Kipling's 'Tommy' would make the connection that these are the same music halls that soldiers such as the eponymous Tommy try to visit, only to find that 'They gave a drunk civilian room, but 'adn't none for me'.<sup>79</sup> Harvey's disdain was not for soldiers who were doing safer jobs, but instead for those who profited from the war, yet had little regard for soldiers and were not willing to be warriors themselves.

The poem can be easily mistaken for trench literature given its overtones of infantry grumbling, and indications of inter-service rivalry. In *Voices of Silence*, Noakes included it in a group of poems that she highlighted for demonstrating that 'writers in trench magazines derived much fun [...] from inter-corps rivalry, and from mocking the staff'.<sup>80</sup> Her notes show that she was aware the poem was published in *Gloucestershire Friends*, although she could easily have thought it was among those poems that Harvey wrote for the *Gazette* but failed to publish before capture.<sup>81</sup> It is not inconceivable that Harvey was inspired to write the poem while still in the trenches, or on leave in England. However, it is copied out in full in the *Gloucestershire Friends* manuscript, with editing showing that it was not completed before then.<sup>82</sup>

Harvey crossed out the draft's entire final stanza, probably because it was not well polished and patronised the reader, going into more detail than necessary to explain its own meaning. It also contains an anti-Semitic note,

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., pp. 41-42.

<sup>79</sup> Rudyard Kipling, *Barrack Room Ballads and Other Verses* (London: Methuen & Co., 1892), p. 6.

<sup>80</sup> Noakes, p. 280.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p. 407.

<sup>82</sup> Harvey, 'Gloucestershire Friends' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 2.

calling Jews 'unpatriotic'.<sup>83</sup> This points towards Harvey's admiration for the works of G.K. Chesterton, who before the war had claimed that Jews were extreme capitalists, and that they refused to assimilate.<sup>84</sup> The deleted stanza reads:

Now war's an education, as everybody knows  
And one cant [sic] get an education *and* money I suppose:  
But I ask you this fair unpatriotic jews [sic] & such  
As need the education, & thirst for it so much  
Those gentlemen who'd really love to go, but have to stay  
Since the maximum of danger means the minimum of pay!<sup>85</sup>

Harvey's poetry had previously challenged those who profited from the war, but whose patriotism did not extend to enlisting. He first did this in 'To the Patriots of Poplar', as the poem took aim at the Londoners who used the war as an excuse to loot the property of German immigrants. That he took up the pen in defence of a persecuted minority makes his criticism of Jews in the draft of 'Ballad of Army Pay' seem uncharacteristic, though no less unsavory.

'To the Patriots of Poplar' was not as well written as 'The Ballade of Army Pay', and suffers from a poor attempt to recreate a London accent that falls short of Kipling's ear for dialect, such as Harvey's: 'The 'uns is usin' pison – the Loositania's sunk / We reads the dily pipers, so we knows all abaht it.'<sup>86</sup> But it does demonstrate Harvey's indignation at the bluster shown by those nowhere near the trenches. Its speaker, a rioter, urges other potential rioters to 'Come show yer patriotic spirit, lets [sic] get drunk. / 'Eave 'alf a blooming brick at someone's shop – then do a bunk', because that is easier 'nor route marchin' and shootin' in a dry / Dusty land'.<sup>87</sup> This line referencing 'route marchin'

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Bryan H. Cheyette, 'An Overwhelming Question: Jewish Stereotyping in English Fiction and Society, 1875-1914' (unpublished PhD dissertation, Sheffield, 1986), pp. 144-45.

<sup>85</sup> Harvey, 'Gloucestershire Friends' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 2. The italics used at '*and*' were indicated by Harvey in margin notes.

<sup>86</sup> Harvey, 'Patriots of Poplar', p. 11.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

remembers the soldiers in Kipling's poem 'Route Marchin', who are told 'There's worser things than marchin' from Umballa to Cawnpore'.<sup>88</sup> This allusion to the soldiers in Kipling's poem sarcastically highlights the difference between soldiers suffering true hardships for their country, and those who take advantage of their country's troubles for personal gain. The poem also parodies the music-hall standard 'War Song' by G.W. Hunt, which is thought to have introduced the term 'jingoism' in the lines 'We don't want to fight but by Jingo! if we do / We've got the ships, we've got the men, and we got the money too!'<sup>89</sup> Harvey imitates this, ending his poem with 'We doesn't want to fight (as the dear old verses sy [sic]) / But if we do we've got the bricks – by jingo!'<sup>90</sup> In alluding to this music-hall song, Harvey points an accusing finger at the same entertainers that he later attacked in 'Ballade of Army Pay', painting them as mere rabble-rousers. Harvey may have written 'Ballad of Army Pay' as another chance to attack the 'shirkers' and demagogues at home, aided by the opportunity for a much wider audience with *Gloucestershire Friends* in 1917 than he had with the June 1915 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, which was printed before the journal reached wide public distribution.

Harvey's criticism of non-combatants who profited from the war should not be confused with protest against the war itself. He still believed in the righteousness of Britain's war against Germany. His memorial poems show that he did not believe that Allied soldiers were dying in vain, but gloriously for their cause. In 'The Dead' he speaks to fallen soldiers, telling them that by dying in battle they have 'never crept into the night / That lurks for all mankind', but

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<sup>88</sup> Kipling, p. 68.

<sup>89</sup> 'Jingo, Int., and N., and Adj.', *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) <<http://0-www.oed.com/view/Entry/101343>> [accessed 21 January 2014].

<sup>90</sup> Harvey, 'Patriots of Poplar', p. 11.

instead have found 'Old honour – jest of fools, yet still the soul of all delight'.<sup>91</sup> Only fools, he believes, would not welcome such an honorable death. This shows the influence of Housman's 'To an Athlete Dying Young', just as 'To R.E.K.' did, by proposing that it is well to die at the height of glory and renown, rather than suffer the ignominy of old age. In his novel he stated of Will Harvey's night patrols: 'life missed a glorious opportunity in not condemning him to die lingering through one of those horror-filled nights of his own choosing'.<sup>92</sup> For Harvey, dying young for a good cause was the most desirable of deaths.

'Sonnet (To One Killed in Action)' contained another admission, namely that Harvey enjoyed the thrill of combat: 'Always my eyes / Sparkle to danger: Oh it was a joy to me.'<sup>93</sup> As 'Prisoners' put it, he 'woed bright Danger for a thrilling kiss' – the capitalization of Danger raising it to the level of a personal deity.<sup>94</sup> This glorification of combat made Harvey uncomfortable, to the extent that he felt something was wrong with him: in 'Sonnet (To One Killed in Action)' it was his enjoyment of combat that, ironically, made him unworthy of an honourable death in battle.

At the same time, Harvey still believed that war was a human failure. In a prison-camp lecture titled 'War – Its Causes and Remedy' he stated that 'war in itself and from all sane standpoints [is] a cruel, stupid, ineffectual, wasteful, and thoroughly evil thing'.<sup>95</sup> *Gloucestershire Friends* addressed these paradoxical feelings with poems titled simply 'Ballade No. 1' and 'Ballade No. 2'. Each poem is coherent in its own meaning, although the two poems contradict each other. The first has the refrain 'Because of you I loathe the name of War', whereas the

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<sup>91</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, p. 36.

<sup>92</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 193, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>93</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, p. 18.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>95</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 255-56.

second states 'Because of you I love the name of War'.<sup>96</sup> It is not difficult to understand why the speaker hates war in 'Ballade No. 1': he watches soldiers relaxing and bathing but grieves because some will soon die, then he witnesses them becoming

piteous corpses yellow-black,  
Rotting unburied in the sunbeam's light,  
With teeth laid bare by yellow lips curled back.<sup>97</sup>

Given this, he would have a hard case to make for loving war in 'Ballade No. 2'. There, his introductory reasons are understandable enough: in the first stanza he explains that soldiering allows him to commune with nature as 'beauty [is] never absent from our marches'.<sup>98</sup> In the second stanza he delights in camaraderie brought by physical labour and shared hardship:

I have tramped tired and dusty to a tune  
Of singing voices tired as I, but scorning  
To yield up gaiety.<sup>99</sup>

This romanticises the soldier's life in the same way as his pre-war poem 'Song of the Road' did. The final stanza is the most controversial, as the speaker admits that he never fully valued life

Until that battle blew with fiery breath  
Over the earth his message terrible  
Crying aloud the things Peace could not tell.<sup>100</sup>

He argues that 'ancient custom' pleads the case for war to 'Heaven and Hell' – man has always thrived in combat, so why should that change now?<sup>101</sup> The poem's *envoi* reminds the reader that Christ said 'Not peace I bring you, but the sword', and Harvey asserts that it is even for Christ's sake that he 'love[s] the

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<sup>96</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, pp. 27-30.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.



name of war'.<sup>102</sup> Like the lawyer that he was, he builds his argument by beginning with reasons that are easy to accept, before declaring that war is a natural state for men, and finally calling on the words of scripture to justify his feelings.

Still, Harvey balanced his occasional idealisation of war with recognition of its true horrors. The war shattered many notions of chivalric combat, as advances in military technology created destruction on previously unimagined levels. Harvey acknowledged this in 'To the Devil on his Appalling Decadence', claiming that war was becoming more and more like a vision of hell. He tells Satan:

Man's soul your traffic was. You would not kick  
His bloody entrails flying in the air.  
Oh, 'Krieg ist Krieg' we know, and 'C'est la guerre!  
But Satan, don't you feel a trifle sick?<sup>103</sup>

'Entrails flying in the air' evokes the effects of the new mass use of high-angle indirect-artillery fire in which a shell approaches from above its victim but often explodes below, sending human remains skyward. Field artillery of past wars had generally fired flat-trajectory, non-exploding rounds that would not destroy victims in the way described. His chosen image is a reflection of the changing face of war, which has become so brutal that even Satan might grow weary of it.

It must be remembered that Harvey's poems which romanticised war were written with a tint of nostalgia. He was now away from the front, and looking back on his time there as an exciting, idealised past from the perspective of a mundane, depressing present. Harvey was rarely content where he was, but always looked to the past or the future. This discontent was demonstrated in 'A Cricket Match', which was included in the *Gloucestershire*

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 30. Christ's words can be found in John 14:27.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

*Friends* manuscript, but dropped by the publishers. It states in text that it is about the 1/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters' officers-versus-men match of June 1915, and indicates that this was same match that 'Cricket (the Catch)' was set in.<sup>104</sup> In 'A Cricket Match' Harvey reminisces about the match, but more so about the adventures he and 'K' had traveling the French countryside on bicycles while trying to find a carpet to use as a matting for the pitch. 'K' is certainly R.E. Knight, who was 'this long while dead' but 'live enough [...] that day in June'.<sup>105</sup> The poem reminds the reader that many people who were alive that day in 1915 no longer were by the next year, as it also notes that 'live enough were they / The people that we passed upon our way.'<sup>106</sup> The poem's last stanza shows that Harvey had already started to idealise his days of rotating in and out of the front lines, despite the death and destruction that haunted these memories:

O God, how vividly it all comes back!  
 The laughing days of danger and of glee,  
 Those dear dear friends of mine then free to roam  
 Laughing at funny things they chanced to see  
 Who now in dark earth lie and wait for me.<sup>107</sup>

In 1915's 'Cricket (The Catch)', the act of catching the ball takes Harvey mentally from wartime France to 'Childhood that is fled: / Rossall on the shore', which he describes as 'Happy days long dead'.<sup>108</sup> The two poems show us how much of a sentimentalist Harvey was. Writing in 1916/17, he wished himself back to 1915 in what he claimed was 'The finest match that [he] ever did bat in / [...] played in France within the sound of guns'; however, during that very match he was wishing himself back to his youth at Rossall School.<sup>109</sup> Combined, they show that Harvey was never truly content with where he was, while 'A Cricket

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<sup>104</sup> Harvey, 'Gloucestershire Friends' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 2.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Harvey, 'Out of the Trenches', GA, FWH, D12912/8/1/1.

<sup>109</sup> Harvey, 'Gloucestershire Friends' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 2.

Match' particularly illustrates the extent to which he missed the camaraderie found in a fighting unit.

Most of the POW and war poems from *Gloucestershire Friends* were written at Gütersloh, where Harvey remained until 20 March 1917, at which point all British officers held there were transferred to Crefeld *Offiziersgefangenenlager*. Simultaneously, non-British-and-Commonwealth prisoners at Crefeld began to be removed. Harvey thought that the transfer was because German attempts to sow discord between prisoners of various nations had failed.<sup>110</sup> This was not merely based on his prejudice against German motives: according to an American ambassador's report, the Germans claimed that various nationalities were originally confined together in order to 'demonstrate to [the] prisoners that they were not neutral allies'.<sup>111</sup> A new policy of separating the nationalities would have advantages for the captors, and for some prisoners. British and Commonwealth prisoners received more parcels and aid than other nationalities; centralising them would streamline logistics for the captors and free transportation resources for use at the front. In Harvey's memoirs he noted that parcels at Crefeld 'arrived regularly and were quickly distributed'.<sup>112</sup> This may have been a result of the fact that the British prisoners were now more consolidated, and therefore their mail would have a more direct route to them from home, although Harvey never gave the Germans any credit for this.

The transfer was completed by rail and with little incident, but with much regret by POWs involved in tunneling activities, who found that they had not dug past the wire by the time they were forced to leave. Harvey was not a tunneler,

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<sup>110</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 110-11.

<sup>111</sup> McCarthy, p. 45.

<sup>112</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 21.

so for him the great disappointment caused by the transfer was a loss of camaraderie, as he had enjoyed the company of Russian and French prisoners. On arriving at Crefeld, he found that the POWs there had been, on the whole, captured earlier in the war than the Gütersloh POWs. The increased time in captivity had caused society amongst them to stagnate. Most had divided their open barracks rooms into private compartments using cardboard, reducing social contact.<sup>113</sup> Upon arrival, the Gütersloh officers were treated by the Crefeld officers as if they were new captures, and were generally ignored and only gradually allowed into society. Additionally, the camp's parade ground was less suitable to playing sports than Gütersloh's. It was smaller and rocky, and the ground was somewhat septic owing to its previous use as a training area for cavalry. Cuts from falling on the rocks easily became infected.<sup>114</sup> The Gütersloh men found themselves enjoying much less physical activity, leading to reduced psychological health.

Despite this downward turn in morale, transfer to Crefeld was a blessing for Harvey. The commandant was an old-fashioned Prussian officer, who placed great value on gentlemanly conduct. It was he who allowed Harvey's manuscript to be sent to England (albeit denying the cover illustration).<sup>115</sup> Officially, officers' outgoing mail was limited to one six-page letter twice a month, and one post card per week.<sup>116</sup> Regulations allowed commandants to permit extra mail, at their own discretion, to officers who had active business concerns before capture.<sup>117</sup> Crefeld's commandant seems to have used this regulation in Harvey's case. Most of the tyrannical commandants that Harvey

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<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 117-18.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 117-21.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 119-20.

<sup>116</sup> McCarthy, pp. 273-74.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 217, p. 274.

later encountered would not have been so generous.

The exact date that Harvey mailed the manuscript home is not clear, but by 20 May 1917 it had still not been received by his sister Gladys.<sup>118</sup> Harvey included instructions for publication in the manuscript, noting Sidgwick & Jackson as his preferred publishers, his desired terms, and his request that the foreword be written by Bishop George Frodsham, the Canon Residentiary of Gloucester Cathedral who had praised *A Gloucestershire Lad* in a *Morning Post* article.<sup>119</sup> Little did Harvey know how much this choice of an author for the foreword would affect the publication of his collection.

### **Publishing *Gloucestershire Friends: Poems from a German Prison Camp***

On 23 May 1917, Harvey wrote a letter to inform Matilda of his new address – after only two months at Crefeld the camp was closed and the officers were moved to Schwarmstedt.<sup>120</sup> He also informed her that Captain Jackson's cover had been disallowed, and that he had sent further instructions regarding publishing. However, even this letter would not reach The Redlands until 17 June, followed by a letter arriving on 28 July which indicated that Harvey had still received no information about publication of the manuscript, even though much work had been done by that time.<sup>121</sup> With correspondence so unreliable, Matilda, along with Harvey's sister Gladys, and cousin Edith, were left to deal with publication themselves. Edith typed the proofs, as she had for *A Gloucestershire Lad*, and Matilda initially suggested to Edith that she also write to Sidgwick & Jackson since Harvey could not do so himself.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Matilda Harvey to Harvey, 20 May 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/46.

<sup>119</sup> Harvey, 'Gloucestershire Friends' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 2.

<sup>120</sup> Harvey to Matilda Harvey, 23 May 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/47.

<sup>121</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Letter from Bishop Frodsham to Sidgwick & Jackson, 17 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/30; Matilda Harvey to Bishop Frodsham, 28 July 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/48.

<sup>122</sup> Matilda Harvey to Harvey, 20 May 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/46.

According to Harvey's instructions, Matilda sent the manuscript to Bishop Frodsham for him to review before writing his foreword. Frodsham had some standing in the literary world, as his poetry reviews in prominent periodicals demonstrated. He had also recently published his own work, *A Bishop's Pleasance*, in 1915. Not only did he agree to write the foreword, he also immediately took over the task of seeing the collection published.<sup>123</sup> Frodsham became Harvey's *de facto* literary agent, as seventy-one items of correspondence to and from him show. Harvey was immensely lucky in this patronage: Frodsham had a reputation as a tireless worker, an effective administrator, and shrewd financial planner, having saved the Diocese of North Queensland from imminent financial ruin on being consecrated as its bishop in 1902 – while simultaneously leading a fundraising campaign to rebuild St James Cathedral in Townsville when it was severely damaged by a cyclone the next year. Prior to this, he had been known for his passion for editing the bishopric's *Church Chronicle*, and had even served as a chaplain to the Queensland Defence Force during the Second Boer War, giving him an insight into Harvey's world as a soldier. Also credited for helping to found the Australian Institute for Tropical Medicine, he had retired from his position as a bishop in 1913, having accomplished all of this by the age of fifty. He then returned to his homeland of England as a canon residentiary at Gloucester Cathedral, and began serving on a War Office committee that advised on the employment of women in traditionally male jobs during the war.<sup>124</sup> He certainly had fewer official duties as a canon compared to a bishop, and being such an industrious

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<sup>123</sup> Matilda Harvey to Bishop Frodsham, 30 May 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/4; Bishop Frodsham to Matilda Harvey, 4 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/5.

<sup>124</sup> John Charles Vockler, 'Frodsham, George Horsfall (1863-1937)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography Online* (Canberra: National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 1981) <<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/frodsham-george-horsfall-6250>> [accessed 22 July 2015].

man, was looking for further work. None of the previous Harvey biographies mention Frodsham's crucial role in publishing the collection, although they can hardly be blamed, as even Harvey failed to give the Bishop credit. Frodsham would have a great deal of influence on the final publication of the collection, including its publishing terms, layout, cover design, and, most importantly, its content. The Bishop's personal tastes and opinions would also be reflected in the final form of *Gloucestershire Friends*.

It is not clear how Frodsham acquired this responsibility. Matilda sent the manuscript to him on 30 May 1917 to aid in writing his introduction, and by 4 June he had written to her enclosing a copy of a letter he had sent on her behalf to Sidgwick & Jackson, which stated that he had been appointed to oversee publication.<sup>125</sup> He asked Matilda if he could review the contract used for *A Gloucestershire Lad*, informing her that he was not committing to publication with Sidgwick & Jackson, but was simply 'throwing out [his] advance trenches'.<sup>126</sup> Frodsham was unimpressed with Sidgwick & Jackson after reviewing the modest terms they had offered on *A Gloucestershire Lad*. He felt that the firm would better be known as 'Shylock & Co., Ltd'. and wrote that he had heard it said that 'Barabbas was a publisher'.<sup>127</sup> Frodsham then set to work, using his skills as a shrewd businessman and publicist to drive up interest in Harvey's work, while playing publishers against each other. His first task was sending an open letter to the editors of various major and minor publications:

It will interest many of your readers to know that I have received from Lieut. F.W. Harvey the manuscript of a new volume entitled 'Gloucestershire Friends: Poems from a German Prison Camp'. It goes almost without saying that the verses are worthy of the author of 'A Gloucestershire Lad', and that they are pathetically illuminative of what the best of our men are thinking and doing to while [sic] away the

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<sup>125</sup> Matilda Harvey to Frodsham, 30 May 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/4; Frodsham to Matilda Harvey, 4 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/5.

<sup>126</sup> Frodsham to Matilda Harvey, 4 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/5.

<sup>127</sup> Bishop Frodsham to Matilda Harvey, 5 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/7.

impracticable hours of their captivity.<sup>128</sup>

He went on to thank the commandant at Crefeld for 'this act of literary courtesy'.<sup>129</sup> The letter was printed locally in the *Gloucestershire Chronicle* and the *Gloucestershire Journal* on 9 June, nationally in the *Morning Post* on the 11<sup>th</sup>, in the *TLS* on the 14<sup>th</sup>, and in the *Times* itself, from where it was eventually reprinted in the August issue of the ever-faithful 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*.<sup>130</sup> The letter's printing probably extended to many other publications.

Sidgwick & Jackson wrote to Frodsham on 5 June, stating that they wished to see the manuscript.<sup>131</sup> They were prepared to offer better terms than before, but added that 'it is not easy to publish anything under present conditions, and [...] costs of manufacturing are increasing daily'.<sup>132</sup> Complaints about the costs of publishing were certainly an attempt to lower expectations. Little did they know that Frodsham was not to be so easily manipulated. He wrote his open letter on that same day, no doubt to ensure that public demand for the collection was apparent before entering into any contract talks. Frodsham was usually one to respond immediately to a letter, but in this case he waited. On the 9<sup>th</sup> he received another letter from the firm, urging him to send the manuscript, as they had just received a manuscript from 'a friend of [Harvey's]' (Gurney's *Severn & Somme*), and thought the two might be published together.<sup>133</sup> Still, Frodsham waited until the 11<sup>th</sup> to reply, enclosing a

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<sup>128</sup> Bishop Frodsham to 'The Editor', 5 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/8.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> George Horsfall Frodsham, 'Lieut. Harvey's Poems', *Gloucestershire Chronicle*, 9 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/13; George Horsfall Frodsham, 'Lieut. Harvey's Poems', *Gloucester Journal*, 9 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/13; George Horsfall Frodsham, 'Poems from a German Prison Camp', *The Morning Post*, 11 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/14; George Horsfall Frodsham, 'Poems from a German Prison', *TLS*, 14 June 1917, p. 285, TLSHA; George Horsfall Frodsham, 'Poems from a German Prison' (reprinted from *The Times*), 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*, August 1917, TJUM.

<sup>131</sup> Sidgwick & Jackson to Bishop Frodsham, 5 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/10.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Sidgwick & Jackson to Bishop Frodsham, 9 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/12.



copy of his announcement letter clipped from that day's *Morning Post*. He added that the letter 'will probably be published in other papers'.<sup>134</sup> With this he finally enclosed a copy of the manuscript, and informed the publishers that he would like terms. In order to apply more pressure on the firm, he informed them that he had already been approached by other publishers, but that he thought it fair to give Sidgwick & Jackson the first chance to see it.<sup>135</sup>

That same day, the secretary to the publisher Bertram Christian wrote to Frodsham. The letter indicated that Frodsham had personally mentioned to Christian the possibility of publishing the manuscript. It informed Frodsham that Christian was not interested in competing with other publishers for the rights.<sup>136</sup> Frodsham replied that 'such an idea never entered [his] mind', yet his previous mention of other publishers in his letter to Sidgwick & Jackson shows that he was using the threat of other publishers to gain an advantage on them.<sup>137</sup> On the 14<sup>th</sup> the *TLS* ran Frodsham's announcement, and that same day Christian himself wrote to say that he *actually* was interested in coming to an agreement regarding publication, while suggesting that the previous letter suffered from some misunderstanding owing to his secretary writing rather than himself.<sup>138</sup> That same day, T. Fischer Unwin also wrote to express interest in publishing the collection, directly stating that his interest was created by the announcement in the *TLS*.<sup>139</sup> Meanwhile, Frodsham had been collecting letters from the general public that asked who would be publishing the collection and when. He seemed to be preparing to use these to prove the marketability of the collection, forwarding them to Matilda, but asking her to return them quickly, as he

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<sup>134</sup> Bishop Frodsham to Sidgwick & Jackson, 11 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/14.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> Bertram Christian's Secretary to Bishop Frodsham, 11 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/15.

<sup>137</sup> Bishop Frodsham to Bertram Christian, 12 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/16.

<sup>138</sup> Bertram Christian to Bishop Frodsham, 14 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/23.

<sup>139</sup> T. Fisher Unwin to Bishop Frodsham, 14 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/22.

intended to show them to publishers.<sup>140</sup> Frodsham's open-letter gambit was paying off.

The tactics worked, and on the 14<sup>th</sup> he received improved terms from Sidgwick & Jackson, which he personally took to The Redlands to discuss with Matilda before accepting.<sup>141</sup> He sent a copy of his acceptance letter to Matilda, in which he informed Sidgwick & Jackson that Unwin was also interested in publishing – probably a slight warning to them that he had secured other options.<sup>142</sup> Frodsham's loyalty lay with Harvey and his family over the publishers, and resulted in securing a contract that was vastly improved over Harvey's first. With *A Gloucestershire Lad*, Harvey had earned no royalties on the first 500 copies, 10% on 501-2000 copies sold, and then 15% thereafter up to 10,000. In the highly unlikely event that it sold more than 10,000 then he would have received 25%.<sup>143</sup> Now they were offering 15% for the first 2000, 17.5% from 2001-4000, and 20% after the much more achievable final number of 4001 copies and up.<sup>144</sup> The royalties were increased in part owing to the success of *A Gloucestershire Lad*, although were it not for Frodsham's involvement, the publishers may have tried to take advantage of the Harveys' inexperience.

Having settled on a publisher, the Bishop began the task of overseeing publication. As Harvey was to remain absent through this process, the burden was on Frodsham and Matilda to see to it that the collection was published as closely as possible to his intent. As mentioned, Harvey had included some indications for his vision of the final layout, including order of poems, headings

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<sup>140</sup> Bishop Frodsham to Matilda Harvey, 13 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/19.

<sup>141</sup> Bishop Frodsham to Sidgwick & Jackson, 15 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/25.

<sup>142</sup> Bishop Frodsham to Matilda Harvey, 15 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/26.

<sup>143</sup> Memorandum of Agreement, 17 June 1916, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/2.

<sup>144</sup> Sidgwick & Jackson to Bishop Frodsham, 13 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/20.

and sub-headings, and markings which indicated which poems he thought should be chosen first for exclusion. By and large, Frodsham would be deferred to by both Matilda and the publishers regarding editorial choices.

Initially, Frodsham instructed Sidgwick & Jackson to cut what poems they wished, then he would read the proofs and decide if he agreed with their editorial decisions.<sup>145</sup> Frank Sidgwick reviewed the poems and sent his contents proposal to Frodsham, stating: 'I have [marked for omission] all those sanctioned by the author, except the poem "To the Devil [on His Appalling Decadence]" which I find rather good'.<sup>146</sup> His decision to use Harvey's own proposed exclusions is problematic, as Harvey's manuscript was not entirely clear on this point. Harvey had marked poems for possible omission with an 'X' directly above the handwritten drafts of them, as well as similarly marking omissions in his proposed table of contents, yet these two do not entirely line up. Confusion is compounded by yet another list written on the page opposing his table of contents, which appears to be abbreviated titles for several poems, each with an X next to it. Harvey gave no indication as to what this list meant. 'To the Devil on His Appalling Decadence' was not marked for deletion on either the poem itself, or in his table of contents. The confusion seems to have come from the third list, where one line reads only 'X Devil'.<sup>147</sup>

Frodsham's religious beliefs nearly saw the poem cut, as he told Sidgwick that the Devil 'is a dangerous person to address, as Robert Burns discovered to his cost'.<sup>148</sup> Frodsham added that he saw that Harvey 'had put a cross against it' in the manuscript, perhaps hoping to use the ambiguous third

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<sup>145</sup> Frodsham to Matilda Harvey, 15 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/26.

<sup>146</sup> Sidgwick & Jackson to Bishop Frodsham, 18 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/31.

<sup>147</sup> Harvey, 'Gloucestershire Friends' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 2.

<sup>148</sup> Bishop Frodsham to Sidgwick & Jackson, 19 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/32.

list to his advantage should he disapprove of the poem.<sup>149</sup> However, the poem was published. Frodsham's inclination toward Christian themes also had the very positive effect of saving the 'The Bugler', with its strong religious message. R.B. McKerrow – who took over the firm's poetry publishing when Sidgwick was conscripted – had suggested cutting it, but Frodsham argued on its behalf. He suggested ending the collection with it, as he saw the poem as a 'sounding call of hope and readiness'.<sup>150</sup> He added that it should be preceded by the equally Christian 'The Stranger'.<sup>151</sup> Both suggestions were taken up, and 'The Bugler' would become one of Harvey's most popular and well-reviewed poems, particularly famous in America, and reprinted in many anthologies.

However, many of the poems that Harvey most wanted published were cut in the next round of editing. 'To Rupert Brooke' was the first of these, as Sidgwick stated that he did not feel it was good enough.<sup>152</sup> Sidgwick may have felt that publishing and profiting from tributes to Brooke would appear to be exploitative, as the firm had been Brooke's publisher. Harvey had also placed no less than three tributes to R.E. Knight in the collection: 'To R.E.K.', 'The Listening Post' [alternately titled 'On Listening'], and 'A Cricket Match'. The three had been arranged together in his table of contents, but only 'To R.E.K.' was kept.<sup>153</sup> Tributes to dead comrades remained a priority for Harvey throughout his life; it is unlikely that, had he been in England to oversee the process, he would have allowed the elegies to be cut.

Just as Sidgwick & Jackson had promoted the front-line material in *A Gloucestershire Lad*, both Frodsham and the publishers saw the marketing

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Bishop Frodsham to Sidgwick & Jackson, 10 July 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/35.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Sidgwick & Jackson to Frodsham, 18 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/31.

<sup>153</sup> Harvey, 'Gloucestershire Friends' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 2; Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, p. 39.

value in the fact that this collection had been created in a POW camp. When Frodsham submitted the manuscript to Sidgwick & Jackson, he stated:

apart from the widespread interest in Mr. Harvey's work, this volume will be unique in its appeal to the public from the fact that it is the first book of poems – or indeed of any literature, so far as I know – that has come direct from a German prison camp.<sup>154</sup>

The publishers decided to abandon Harvey's proposed layout for the collection, in order to move the POW poems to the front and place the regional poems further back – to which Frodsham made no objections.<sup>155</sup> The Bishop later suggested that the publishers add '2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant, 1/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment' after Harvey's name on the title page.<sup>156</sup> Frodsham even encouraged the publishers to make mention of Harvey's DCM in advertisements.<sup>157</sup> He further suggested that the cover should feature the subtitle 'Poems from a German prison camp' in larger print than the actual title.<sup>158</sup> The word 'Gloucestershire' in the title drew a connection to Harvey's previous work, but Frodsham felt that it had no wider attraction, whereas the POW connection was 'the book's chief appeal to the general public'.<sup>159</sup>

Captain Jackson's cover illustration would have emphasised the POW experience, but since it was unavailable, an alternative had to be found. It was agreed to use a somewhat plain cover featuring a German censor's stamp and the words 'Auf inhalt und häufigkeit geprüft' [Checked for content and regularity].<sup>160</sup> This suggested the censor's stamp that was on the manuscript itself, although for aesthetic reasons Frodsham and Matilda chose to submit an

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<sup>154</sup> Frodsham to Sidgwick & Jackson, 11 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/14.

<sup>155</sup> Sidgwick & Jackson to Frodsham, 18 June 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/31.

<sup>156</sup> Bishop Frodsham to Matilda Harvey, 10 July 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/34; Bishop Frodsham to Sidgwick & Jackson, 12 July 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/40.

<sup>157</sup> Frodsham to Sidgwick & Jackson, 12 July 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/40.

<sup>158</sup> Frodsham to Sidgwick & Jackson, 10 July 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/35.

<sup>159</sup> Frodsham to Matilda Harvey, 10 July 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/34.

<sup>160</sup> Bishop Frodsham to Sidgwick & Jackson, 18 July 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/43.

elaborate stamp from Gütersloh featuring a German eagle, rather than the mundane stamp actually on the manuscript.<sup>161</sup> The publishers declined Frodsham's suggestion to enlarge the subtitle, so he convinced them to underline it, but not the title itself.<sup>162</sup> If that were not enough, the connection to the war was made quite clear by a note printed on the front of the dust-jacket:

Lieutenant Harvey, who won the D.C.M. as a Lance-Corporal in the Gloucestershire Regiment in 1915, was taken prisoner last autumn, shortly after his return to the front and a few days before the appearance in England of his first book, 'A GLOUCESTERSHIRE LAD' (now in its fourth impression). The German authorities allowed these poems to be sent home from the prison camp where Lieut. Harvey then was. Bishop Frodsham contributes an Introduction [sic].<sup>163</sup>

Harvey would probably have approved of using the wartime and POW circumstances to promote the collection. He had intended the cover to be an illustration of a prison-camp scene, and had chosen the subtitle himself.

The collection was ready for publication by 28 July, and the contract had reached The Redlands for Matilda to sign in Harvey's place. That same day a letter came from Harvey, showing that he had received no mail since arriving at Schwarmstedt, and was completely unaware that any work had been done towards publication.<sup>164</sup> The German POW authorities in the Hanover district had been purposely delaying the mail of British officers, possibly as part of an official reprisal for perceived mistreatment of German POWs in Britain, although Harvey wondered whether it was because the district commander had lost two divisions to the British at the Somme.<sup>165</sup> Discovering Harvey's ignorance of their progress may have caused Matilda to take pause, as she wrote to Frodsham one last time to ask him if he felt the contract was fair and should be signed.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid.; Bishop Frodsham to Sidgwick & Jackson, 18 August 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/57.

<sup>162</sup> Frodsham to Sidgwick & Jackson, 18 Aug. 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/57.

<sup>163</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, (cover).

<sup>164</sup> Matilda Harvey to Frodsham, 28 July 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/48.

<sup>165</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 140-41.

<sup>166</sup> Matilda Harvey to Frodsham, 28 July 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/48.

Frodsham encouraged her, stating that 'this time Sidgwick & Jackson are acting generously for you'.<sup>167</sup> With all arrangements completed, *Gloucestershire Friends* was set for release on 19 September 1917.<sup>168</sup>

After leaving Germany, *Gloucestershire Friends* had by necessity taken on a life of its own apart from Harvey, but nurtured by Bishop Frodsham. It arrived in England in May 1917 as a rough manuscript, but by September it was a fully-edited, carefully-crafted collection ready for publication. Harvey's life, on the other hand, had not improved at all in the same months. Captivity psychosis began to take hold of him, compounded by a rough life when he found himself transferred to the most brutal officers' POW camp in Germany: Holzminden.

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<sup>167</sup> Bishop Frodsham to Matilda Harvey, 1 August 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/50.

<sup>168</sup> Sidgwick & Jackson to Bishop Frodsham, 7 September 1917, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/58.

## Chapter V: Continued Confinement

### August 1917 – January 1919

In August 1917, Harvey and his comrades were informed that they would soon be moved to the prison camp at Holzminden. Although Holzminden had a reputation as a 'strafe camp', they were probably still somewhat happy to be leaving Schwarmstedt.<sup>1</sup> Harvey later described Schwarmstedt as being particularly unpleasant: latrines were located directly beside living quarters and contributed to foul air; the tar-paper roofs of the quarters leaked; the drinking water was foul-smelling and brown, forcing prisoners to buy filtered water for 10 *pfennigs* a glass from the German-run prisoners' canteen; and the food was so bad that bread could be rolled into a ball and stuck to the wall by throwing.<sup>2</sup> The commandant was not particularly brutal, but indifferent. To Harvey's amusement, he still wore an Uhlan officer's uniform 'plastered with enormous decorations gained [Harvey believed] in 1870, when his mind last worked'.<sup>3</sup> Harvey may have learned by this time that he himself had received a small honour, with promotion to Lieutenant effective 1 July 1917.<sup>4</sup> News of his promotion may have added urgency to his sense of duty to escape.

A few weeks before the move, a friend gave Harvey a civilian suit that had been smuggled into the camp, completing the escape kit that he had been preparing.<sup>5</sup> Harvey managed to keep it hidden during the search that precipitated the prisoners' movement from the camp by wearing it under his

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<sup>1</sup> *Strafe* is German for punishment – it was during the First World War that *strafe* entered the English language through the phrase 'Gott strafe England' (God punish England), eventually developing its current meaning of a ground attack by low-flying aircraft. POWs used the word to refer to most punishments or injustices.

<sup>2</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 138.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134.

<sup>4</sup> 'Local Commissions', unknown publication, [1917], found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'I', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/7, fol. 93.

<sup>5</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 210.



trench-coat while the guards searched his room, and then swiftly changing back into his uniform and hiding the suit in his room before the guards searched his person.<sup>6</sup>

As the officers left Schwarmstedt, Harvey again wore his civilian suit underneath his trench-coat. Along with this he carried a rucksack, which was allowed for transporting personal items, but was actually holding his escape kit: three weeks of food, complemented by a map and compass in his pockets. The POWs were entrained, with five or six POWs and one guard in each passenger-car compartment. It was Harvey's plan to wait until near dusk, and then jump from the train – which was moving north, towards the Netherlands. As reckless and ill-planned as Harvey's train-jumping scheme may seem, it is worth noting that at least seven British POWs over four incidents were able to make successful escapes using the same technique – although it is unknown if Harvey had heard of these.<sup>7</sup>

The officers in Harvey's compartment attempted to aid him. The men took turns leaving the compartment to visit the lavatory, with each man taking successively longer in the hope that the guard would become accustomed to the compartment being one officer short. Harvey realized that the only window on the train that he could fit through was the one in his compartment, in full view of his guard, but at least it was on the opposite side of the train from the guards on the roof above the carriage doors. Harvey described his compartment's guard as a gentle old man, who was struggling to stay awake. The POWs surreptitiously attempted to encourage his sleepiness by sharing food and wine with him (by this point in the war, British POWs receiving parcels from home

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 210-11.

<sup>7</sup> John Lewis-Stempel, *The War Behind the Wire – The Life, Death and Glory of British Prisoners of War, 1914-1918* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2014), pp. 210-11.

typically ate better than Germans did in their own country). The guard never completely fell asleep, but began to nod off from time to time. As the afternoon wore on, the POWs were informed that they were thirty minutes from arrival, and although it was not yet dusk, Harvey decided to take his chances.<sup>8</sup>

His comrades stood up and made a prolonged show of getting their luggage down from the racks, thus screening Harvey, who climbed out of the window. He then held onto the windowsill on the outside, watching the ground below fly past at what seemed a dangerous speed. He leapt just as a comrade pushed his rucksack out of the window, landing violently with the pack hitting him squarely in the back. The pack split open and spilled its contents, while Harvey lay stunned for a while, before regaining his senses and making a dash for cover.<sup>9</sup>

Harvey returned to the embankment to collect his food once the train was out of sight. As he did so, he noticed a group of German villagers approaching him. He attempted to deceive them into believing he was merely a German fare-dodger, and ignored them while walking straight towards a village. They persisted, and in the village he found himself cornered by a mob and unable to bluff his way out of the situation. He was quickly arrested and taken to the local police station. The police told him that he was suspected of being a spy – some packages of hard biscuits that he had left lying on the tracks were thought to be dynamite for sabotaging the rail – so he confessed to being an escaped POW bound for Holzminden. This was confirmed, and Harvey soon found himself there in solitary confinement, later stating that the first thing he did was to ‘write an acrostic on the word DAMN!’<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 212-13.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 215-16.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 216-19.

This failed escape attempt may have been the catalyst for Harvey's ultimate descent into 'captivity psychosis', colloquially termed 'Gefangenitis', the psychological condition that Harvey simply referred to as 'green mould'.<sup>11</sup> He spent the next month in solitary confinement – even though the belligerent governments had agreed that the maximum punishment for attempted escape should be two weeks. Harvey claimed it was common practice in Germany for prisoners to spend a fortnight in solitary confinement awaiting trial, then to be sentenced at trial to another fortnight.<sup>12</sup> In his cell he read Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and attempted to write poetry. The monotony of solitude was broken when, owing to overcrowding, he gained a companion in the cells. Harvey taught his cellmate to write poetry, but for his own part, he admitted, 'the poetry that I wrote in cells was very bad'.<sup>13</sup> In fact, after this point, the quality of Harvey's prison-camp poetry would decline, as is apparent from the verse in his next collection, *Ducks, and Other Verses*, and in the unpublished poetry written in his notebooks of the time.

The depression that set in during solitary confinement was compounded when he was released from his cell to find that rumours about the notoriety of Holzminden were true. The commandant, Hauptmann (Captain) Karl Niemeyer, was a brutal man who gained international infamy for his hostility towards POWs. Many prison-camp memoirs are rife with examples of Niemeyer's malevolence, and that of his twin brother who was also a POW-camp commandant in the same region. The *New York Times* claimed that the

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<sup>11</sup> Lunden, 721; Cochrane, 282; Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 170.

<sup>12</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 220.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 221.

brothers were 'known throughout the world for their extreme cruelty to allied prisoners'.<sup>14</sup>

Some of the best poetry in *Gloucestershire Friends* dealt directly with the POW experience. Yet Harvey wrote little on the topic from this point on. In his increasing depression, he may have looked at poetry as a form of escape and thus avoided the topic of confinement. He may also have felt that Niemeyer – unlike the more gentlemanly commandants at previous camps – would never have allowed him to send home poems that even touched on the topic of POW camps.

Two notebooks of Harvey's writings from this time survive, although it appears that he wrote others. A letter from Matilda Harvey dated 1 January 1918 confirms receipt of two notebooks. The first was 'a brown covered exercise book' filled with prose, which exists in the Harvey collection.<sup>15</sup> The second was a 'green book' containing poems, which seems to have been lost since.<sup>16</sup> In the same letter, she refers to a third notebook that was sent to his cousin Edith.<sup>17</sup> This may be the black notebook titled 'A New England', which survives in his collection and has a note written in it acknowledging receipt by Edith.<sup>18</sup> It comprises the manuscript for many poems that were later published in *Ducks, and Other Verses*. Harvey first published the poem 'Ducks' in *The Morning Walk* POW journal, where it was attributed as being 'from "A New England"', while other poems in the journal were attributed as 'from "A

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<sup>14</sup> 'Prison Commanders Fear. Niemeyers Now Face the Prospect of Trial by Allies.', *New York Times*, 15 December 1918, p. 3, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times (1851-2010).

<sup>15</sup> Matilda Harvey to F.W. Harvey, 1 January 1918, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/65; F.W. Harvey, Brown exercise book, 1916-1954, GA, FWH, D12912/2/3/Notebook 2.

<sup>16</sup> Matilda Harvey to Harvey, 1 Jan. 1918, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/65.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Harvey, 'New England' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 3.

Gloucestershire Lad”’, and ‘from “Gloucestershire Friends”’.<sup>19</sup> Sidgwick & Jackson probably later decided to capitalise on the fame that they expected ‘Ducks’ to find by selecting it as the title poem, while ‘A New England’ became the title of a subsection within the collection.

The title ‘A New England’ indicated a shift that Harvey wished to make in his poetry. He felt that after the war, England should be rebuilt as an egalitarian country with a more even wealth distribution, and wanted his poetry to encourage this. His thoughts at this time seem to have been influenced by the distributist movement, a Catholicism-based political ideology championed by G.K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc. Distributism asserted that the best form of economy and government was one that would see property and the means of production spread out amongst the largest possible portion of the population. Harvey had always admired Chesterton and Belloc, as frequent references to them in his pre-war notebooks show.<sup>20</sup> A bound copy of Chesterton’s distributist magazine, *G.K.’s Weekly*, was found amongst Harvey’s papers, with letters confirming that he contributed to it and its predecessor, *The New Witness*, after the war.<sup>21</sup> We cannot guarantee that Harvey was reading distributist literature during his POW time or before; however, distributist thought is evident in his introduction to ‘A New England’, and in its poetry. He was certainly also driven to seek social reform by the inequality he saw during his time in Chesterfield. After the war, Harvey wrote an introduction for the ‘A New England’ section of *Ducks*. A selection summarizes his objectives for the poems:

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<sup>19</sup> F.W. Harvey, ‘Poems’, *The Morning Walk – A Journal of Prisoners of War in Germany*, Souvenir Number, 1918, pp. 31-32, TJUM.

<sup>20</sup> Scrapbook of F.W. Harvey, 1911-1920, GA, CEH, D3921/II/38.

<sup>21</sup> *G.K.’s Weekly*, 28 March 1925-1 January 1927 (London: G.K.’s Weekly, Ltd, 1927), GA, FWH, D12912/8/1/9; Assistant Editor of *The New Witness* to F.W. Harvey, 26 June 1919, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/85; Dorothy Collins to F.W. Harvey, 23 March 1928, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/132.

Though openly propagandist, they are not political, save only in the sense that all poetry is so. I am in no way concerned to discover which 'party' will outwardly achieve a reform which must be born first in the heart: – an immaculate conception.

Practically I am against any man being too poor for the reason that he is my brother, and because it is bad for the State, just as I am against any man being too rich for the same reason and because it is bad form.

What England needs is a spiritual ideal. But how hard it is to be spiritual with a toothache!

How the body reacts upon the mind, and one member on another!

So poverty which cripples the beautiful body of a State, not less than luxury its inevitable companion, must be dealt with ere England can be free to live healthily.<sup>22</sup>

The influence of distributist ideology is here, with echoes of Belloc's 1912 distributist manifesto *The Servile State*. Harvey's assertion that Britain had a spiritual toothache which would divide society reflected Belloc's claim that

Spiritual conflict is more fruitful of instability in the State than conflict of any other kind, and there is acute spiritual conflict, conflict in every man's conscience and ill-ease throughout the commonwealth when the realities of society are divorced from the moral base of its institutions.<sup>23</sup>

The focus on spiritual, rather than political, dissent is indicative of distributist grounding in Catholic ideology and papal teachings – although for Harvey, calling his poetry 'spiritual' rather than 'political' would also ensure that his ideals were distanced from socialism and bolshevism, which would be seen as a growing threat following the Russian Revolution.

Harvey advocated peaceful social revolution, yet added that if this revolution did not happen then 'the war will have been lost, the sacrifice in vain' – indicating that he saw the war itself as part of that revolution.<sup>24</sup> As apparent in 'If We Return', Harvey had started to seek a higher purpose for the war early on. Time as a POW was giving him more opportunity to reflect on this. He now

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<sup>22</sup> Harvey, *Ducks*, pp. 73-74.

<sup>23</sup> Hilaire Belloc, *The Servile State* (London and Edinburgh: T.N. Foulis, 1912), p. 86.

<sup>24</sup> Harvey, *Ducks*, p. 74.

wanted to believe that the war was more than a check on German aggression, and that the suffering he and millions of others were enduring had greater value than merely to re-establish the pre-war *status quo*. Still, the latter half of his introduction indicated an underlying cynicism:

No one can deny the fact that Peace has never seized the national imagination as War has done.

Peace was not spoken of as 'The Great Adventure.' For Peace we never poured out blood and gold like water. Art, housing, education, science, employment, have never received endowment of x<sup>t</sup> millions. To organise efficiently for War took us nearly two years, but for Peace we have taken two thousand: – and failed.<sup>25</sup>

Indeed, the reduction of 'A New England' to only a small section at the end of the collection shows just how little his publishers felt that peaceful social reform could seize readers' imaginations. Only fourteen of the fifty-one poems from Harvey's 'A New England' manuscript would be published in *Ducks*. Of the twelve political poems in the 'A New England' section of *Ducks*, nine were from his 'A New England' manuscript. As his other notebook of poetry manuscripts from this time is no longer with his papers, we cannot be certain if it contained more poems intended for 'A New England', poems that would end up in *Ducks*, or poems for some other use.

Harvey's 'A New England' manuscript begins with the title poem 'New England'. An early draft of this poem is found in the *Gloucestershire Friends* manuscript, with a note stating that it should be the first poem in a collection titled 'A New England'. This cannot be mistaken as an alternative title for *Gloucestershire Friends*, as that title is made clear on the inside cover of the manuscript, and no confusion as to his preferred title was ever mentioned by anyone during the publication process. It is more likely that he struck on the

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

idea of a politically-inspired collection while writing *Gloucestershire Friends*, and made the transition to writing the new collection while preparing to send the earlier one home. The poem 'A New England' is written in ink, distinguishing it from the pencil used for the *Gloucestershire Friends* poems in the notebook, and indicating that it was not composed at the same time. The poem's draft was recopied into his 'A New England' notebook, where it was further edited into its final form. The published version is worth quoting in full here, as its sentiments set the tone for the rest of his 'New England' poems:

We've smashed a thousand cities, we've spilt a sea of gold  
 So precious that we grudged it should be given  
 For building cleanly houses that men should not lie cold:  
 For raising up our England nearer heaven.  
 Red rivers of the blood of man, bright floods of women's tears  
 Have flowed till now Death's raging thirst is stilled  
 And life poured out like water has made an end to slaughter:  
 Now, gentlemen, the time is come – *to build!*

Beneath the sacred hearthstone a thousand years ago  
 Men laid the house's founder; many a bone  
 Betrays their reverent ritual to-day, and even so  
 Unto our children's children will be shown  
 Bones eloquent of lovely lads long dust who left their day  
 (Those many hundred heroes who were killed)  
 Marching with song and laughter into life's strange 'hereafter,'  
 'A New Jerusalem' on earth to build.

To-day not theirs but ours the task, not theirs but ours the shame  
 If on the bones of the fallen rise  
 A city mean and dirty, wronging the English name,  
 Builded of cruelty and lust and lies,  
 Hark! From beneath the hearthstone, a whisper of the slain,  
 'Not unto us' (poor dead), 'That work we willed  
 But unto you is given to raise on earth a heaven:  
 In the great name of God we bid you *Build!*'<sup>26</sup>

This poem constitutes the dead's encouragement to the living to build a better society that will be a 'New Jerusalem'. This may show the influence of William Blake's 'And did those feet in ancient time', which had recently found new popularity thanks to its arrangement by Hubert Parry as 'Jerusalem'. Harvey

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp. 78-79.



admired Parry's work, later writing an appreciation of it and stating that during his childhood he had met Parry – Parry's family home at Highnam Court having been only a mile from The Redlands.<sup>27</sup> Harvey could have heard 'Jerusalem' performed prior to his capture, as it premièred on 28 March 1916 and was immediately successful, leading to its performance throughout the country that summer and, increasingly, its use as an anthem by social reformers.<sup>28</sup>

His time in solitary confinement at Holzminden was a catalyst for his search to find a higher purpose in the war. While in the cell, Harvey read Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, later stating that he thought it 'the greatest novel in the world'.<sup>29</sup> The novel prompted Harvey to use his captivity as time to reflect on social inequality, as well as to shape a new philosophy. Harvey's 1912 essay, 'Tolstoy and the Age', shows that he already saw Tolstoy as a model for authors seeking to guide social reform through their work. He seems to have only read *Anna Karenina* at that time; he does not mention it by name but refers to a work which is set in, and critical of, Tolstoy's own age. Harvey praised Tolstoy: 'To say that the work of Tolstoy rings true is to give but half praise. It is twice true; once artistically, in the sense of that which is all through consistent with itself, and again morally, in the sense of that which at once touches the soul'.<sup>30</sup>

Harvey now found further inspiration in *War and Peace*. One of the protagonists of the novel, Count Pierre Bezukhov, becomes a civilian POW, and through this experience he is able to gain perspective on life that leads him to realise the importance of loving his fellow man. He is primarily guided towards this philosophy by his observations of a fellow POW, the Russian peasant and

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<sup>27</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Parry and Gurney' (author's manuscript), 1945, GA, FWH, D12912/3/3/45.

<sup>28</sup> Jeremy Dibble, *C. Hubert H. Parry – His Life and Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 484.

<sup>29</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 221.

<sup>30</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Tolstoy and the Age', 1912, GA, FWH, D12912/3/3/9.

soldier Platon Karataev. No doubt, Harvey paid special attention to the chapters about Bezukhov's POW experience, especially since Gurney had written to him on New Year's Eve 1916 telling him to 'Remember, if you know it already the Platon Karatayeff [Karataev] episode in "War and Peace"'.<sup>31</sup> Harvey had not read it yet, but when he did he was already informed of those chapters' significance to his situation. The novel describes Karataev as he is seen through Pierre Bezukhov's eyes:

Special attachments, friendships, loves, as Pierre understood them, Karatayef [Karataev] had none; but he liked all men, and lived in a loving way with all with whom his life brought him in contact, and especially with men – not any particular men – but with such as were in his sight. He loved his dog; he loved his comrades, the French; he loved Pierre, who was his companion [...] for Pierre he remained forever what he had seemed to him the first night – the incomprehensible, rotund, and eternal spirit of simplicity and truth.<sup>32</sup>

After his rescue from captivity, Pierre returns to Russian-noble society to live a life he had learned from observing the peasant Karataev: he later tells his wife, 'you cannot understand how I learned from that illiterate man'.<sup>33</sup> Pierre now sees the best in everyone, and continues with vigour the work he had half-heartedly started before capture of seeing his serfs freed, while ensuring that all people living on his estates were properly provided for. Bezukhov develops a philosophy as a POW on how men should live:

While a prisoner [...] Pierre was made aware, not by his reason, but by his whole being, by life, that man is created for happiness, that happiness is in

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<sup>31</sup> Gurney to Harvey, 31 Dec. [1916], GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/17. I have chosen the translations of Russian character names that are most commonly used now; however, quotations from *War and Peace* here are from the Dole translation, which spells the names much differently. Gurney's spelling of Karataev as 'Karatayeff' indicates that he read the Dole translation of *War and Peace*, which uniquely spells the name 'Karatayef' – the second 'f' is Gurney's mistake. With no further evidence available as to what translation Harvey was reading, I have made the assumption that he and Gurney read the same translation. When quoting from that translation, I have followed Dole's character names with the more common translations in square brackets.

<sup>32</sup> Lyof [Leo] N. Tolstoi [Tolstoy], *War and Peace*, trans. by Nathan Haskell Dole, 4 vols. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1889), IV, pp. 51-52.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 289.

himself, in the satisfaction of simple needs of humanity, and that all unhappiness arises, not from lack, but from superfluity.<sup>34</sup>

Harvey said as much in his preface to 'A New England': 'So poverty which cripples the beautiful body of the State, not less than luxury its inevitable companion, must be dealt with ere England can be free to live healthily'.<sup>35</sup>

Pierre's realisation of a love for all mankind and desire to see all classes live without want or excess must have influenced Harvey's 'A New England' philosophy. The first poem that Harvey wrote in his 'New England' manuscript, titled 'Confession', is almost an abbreviated version of Bezukhov's tale, and a manifesto of how the poet would live the rest of his life along similar lines to Bezukhov's post-capture life:

Much have I sung  
Praising and blaming others,  
Being young  
My Brothers.

The world was to save  
And I  
The man to do it  
Splendidly[.]

But today,  
This duty to size you  
Condemn, and appraise you,  
I cast away.

'Happy or sad  
Godly or bad  
Whatever befall  
I love you all.'<sup>36</sup>

The speaker's declaration that he thought he was chosen to save the world reflects Harvey's zeal for Britain's cause as a soldier, as well as Bezukhov's belief that he was chosen to save civilisation by assassinating Napoleon. For both, their zeal leads directly to their capture. Yet the poem's speaker has

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 168.

<sup>35</sup> Harvey, *Ducks*, pp. 73-74.

<sup>36</sup> Harvey, 'New England' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 3.

realised that his duty is simply to love his fellow man, just as Pierre learned from Karataev – even if that means loving his enemies. Harvey’s new philosophy, signalling a spiritual rebirth similar to Count Bezukhov’s, called for a new and freer style of poetry that broke from his old norms – even from the ‘old England’ that poetry such as Housman’s represented.

‘Confession’ was never published, unlike ‘The Bad Men’ which followed it in the manuscript. In ‘The Bad Men’ the speaker states that ‘[he] cannot get [his] heart to hate’ bad men even though he ‘loath[es] their cheery selfishness / Their pride of place and birth and dress. / The ways they spend and get their money’, simply because underneath it all they are ‘so human and so droll’.<sup>37</sup> He vows not to hate these men, but to hate only the systems which place one man above another, and to ‘roll those systems in the mire’.<sup>38</sup> Harvey wanted to see equality achieved through love and not malice, optimism and not pessimism – very much as Tolstoy’s Count Bezukhov had advocated.

Harvey saw this love of mankind as a way to end not only social inequality, but also war. Another unpublished poem from this time, ‘This War of Peace’ – the title again demonstrating the influence of Tolstoy – asserts that despite man’s ability to master nature and improve technology, he still cannot evolve past killing. Harvey stated that ‘lightning [was] harnessed’ yet ‘the old wars stay with us’, so that with technology man is now ‘furnished with sharper claws’ that are used to

torment and tare [sic]  
Our brother’s life to shreds, and finely brand  
And sear his naked soul with many scars.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Harvey, *Ducks*, p. 83.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

<sup>39</sup> Harvey, ‘New England’ (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 3.

Scarring the soul is an allusion to war's psychological damage, and reflects Harvey's realisation that the psychological injuries of war were as much an evil as physical violence.

Harvey had observed as a POW that the soul could be scarred by war even while away from combat. He later stated that it was at around one year of confinement that he 'had begun to feel mouldy', realising that he had previously been wrong to judge those who gave way to deep depression in the camps.<sup>40</sup> The feeling of purposelessness brought on by depression may have been another factor driving him to begin seeking a lesson from his captivity, prompting him to use poetry to explore theories of social reform that might also lead to an end of war. As 'This War of Peace' states, Harvey only saw an end to wars and suffering 'When love had lordship of us, as have we / Lordship of Nature'.<sup>41</sup> As man has learned to use nature's resources for his own gain, something higher than man must control mankind, or else humanity is doomed to repeat the same violence and injustice over and over again.

Although Catholic and more broadly Christian themes recur in his poetry, Harvey did not feel that religion was the only means to form a better world; an appreciation for life should be enough. In 'Requiescat', dedicated to Captain William Morrill, who was killed while trying to escape from Schwarmstedt in June 1917, Harvey claims that if 'men were men, and Christians not at all: / Mere pagans, primitive and quick of sense' who could appreciate that all men 'feel the sun's great blind beneficence: / The kind hand of the breeze' and 'the brotherly blue that's over all', then 'Surely they would not kill!'<sup>42</sup> Mere empathy with others should create a fraternal love that is enough to prevent war.

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<sup>40</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 221-25.

<sup>41</sup> Harvey, 'New England' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 3.

<sup>42</sup> Harvey, *Ducks*, p. 87.

Furthermore, in a rondel published in *Ducks*, he asks why man should make war, 'Since Death's long bayonet finds us all, / And little time we have to spend'.<sup>43</sup> As Death 'whirls our lovers out of call', we should 'Love then to-day, or never at all' – a line which hints at the *carpe diem* attitude towards romantic love in Herrick's 'To the Virgins to Make Much of Time', which Harvey had copied out earlier in life.<sup>44</sup> Replacing Death's usual scythe with a bayonet is not merely indicative of a soldier's poem, it also makes the act of killing more personal – one man stabbed by another, rather than hundreds scythed down at once. By commanding that we 'love then to-day, or never at all', Harvey is stating that one who truly knows love should not be the agent for taking love away from others through killing. That man could be both a lover and a killer had become hypocritical to him, as his pre-war doubts about killing continued to haunt him.

Harvey's 'A New England' poems target hypocrisy as one of the chief causes of evil in the world, particularly in the unwillingness of good men to fight against iniquity. In 'Goodness' he advises the reader not to heed those who speak of God's love and justice but themselves 'lie in pools of passive piety'.<sup>45</sup>

He claims that true goodness

is a passion in the soul  
More fierce than earthly passion, and its peace  
Is pinnacled on violence.<sup>46</sup>

He did not mean physical violence, but rather a violent desire to correct injustice. His poem 'The Contrast' makes the same argument against complacency towards inequity, with a clear distributist message. It compares the lives of people in different classes: 'It's good to be born of wealthy stock and fed on healthy food, / Its good to spend your strength, and sleep and wake with

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.; Early notebook 1, 1909-1914, GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/Notebook 1.

<sup>45</sup> Harvey, *Ducks*, p. 85.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

strength renewed', but 'it's exceeding evil to be ill-gotten and weak / With limbs unskilled to labour and tongue untrained to speak'.<sup>47</sup> This is not saying that those in such a state of weakness are evil, rather that it is an evil that many are not given the opportunity to build their lives and bodies through honest work or education. The first class that Harvey speaks of are yeomanry, those who both own and work their own land, just as Harvey's family did, as they are 'wealthy' but also 'spend their strength' at work each day. This was the ideal class according to distributists: yeomanry were distinct from capitalists as they performed their own labour with their own means of production, rather than relying solely on others to accomplish labour. Therefore, they are 'good'. The proletariat in this poem know nothing of the good countryside life that yeomanry live. The poem states that it is also good to be able to 'tramp in the driving rain' with a 'chair and fire and wine and food at the stormy evening's end', then to enjoy the stars and watch 'As over the dim blue hills of sleep the dawn treads silently'.<sup>48</sup> Yet, for the oppressed, 'There's little enough wondering joy that God's new day is born / When the belly is void and the body is sick and the soul forlorn'.<sup>49</sup> Time to contemplate nature and relax at day's end in one's own home is a luxury not afforded to those for whom day-to-day survival is their only priority.

The poem reflects society as it was understood in the distributist terms framed by Belloc. He claimed that it was

the generation brought up under the Education Acts of the last forty years which has grown up definitely and hopelessly proletarian. The present instinct, use, and meaning of property [land ownership] is lost to it: and this has had two very powerful effects, each strongly inclining our modern wage-earners to ignore the old barriers which lay between a condition of servitude and a condition of freedom. The first effect is this: that property

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

is no longer what they seek, nor what they think obtainable for themselves. The second effect is that they regard the possessors of property as a class apart, whom they always must ultimately obey, often envy, and sometimes hate [...] whose position they, at any rate, accept as a known and permanent social fact, the origins of which they have forgotten, and the foundations of which they believe to be immemorial.<sup>50</sup>

Harvey's poem, too, claims that the proletariat no longer have the intellectual capacity to comprehend the full injustice of their situation: the upper classes have 'time to think and talk [...] of the ways of life, and the ways of death, and the ways of God', whereas in the lower order of society one finds 'little honest speech is there 'twixt men kept fast in hell'.<sup>51</sup> He ends by addressing the reader directly: 'Such wretches can't exist, you hold, among our human kind? / O Sir, you must be very young – or very blind'.<sup>52</sup> Harvey was accusing the reader of simply denying something known to be true, believing that the owners of property were turning a blind eye to the suffering of others. The poem reflects his own experience of learning about poverty in Chesterfield. In his youth, Harvey took for granted those things that the poem suggests are good: being raised in a wealthy home on good food, and having work, education, and time to enjoy nature. He was shocked see these things denied to the poor in Chesterfield. Having them now denied to him as POW intensified his pity for those who never even knew them, and pushed him further towards distributism.

Harvey also continued to write poems based on his wartime and POW experiences. He now explored prison-camp emotions in a more introspective rather than a direct way, reflecting his transition towards poetry that was more philosophical. Two poems from his 'A New England' manuscript, both published

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<sup>50</sup> Belloc, p. 138. Belloc believed that the Elementary Education Acts of 1870 were an example of unofficial codification of class, as in practice they were only applied to the poor. He argued that later laws were then established which officially codified class. See *The Servile State*, p. 158.

<sup>51</sup> Harvey, *Ducks*, p. 84.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.



in *Ducks*, particularly reflect his state as a POW. 'Triolet (I pray that beauty come again)', and 'Joy Captive' focus on the POW's usual forms of depression: feelings of hopelessness about the present and the future, and a tendency to yearn for an idealised past. These poems were written at Schwarmstedt and Holzminden; a note above the manuscript of 'Triolet (I pray that Beauty come again)' states that Edith Harvey had received them in Gloucester by February 1918.<sup>53</sup> This was around the same time that Harvey was moved from Holzminden to Bad-Colberg. He probably sent them after arrival at Bad-Colberg, as Niemeyer would have been unlikely to allow Harvey to send notebooks home.

The poetry in *Gloucestershire Friends* bears out the findings of psychological studies which argue that a dire present and little hope for the future causes POWs to turn to memories. Harvey's later POW poetry continues to bear this out, and illustrates further mental degradation. Living day after day with no change of scene, and no major events to mark the passing of time, led to a depression that was not necessarily a focus on negative emotions, but often a lack of any emotions at all. Harvey described this in his 'Triolet (I pray that Beauty come again)':

I pray the Beauty come again  
 To thrill and fill my life with fire.  
 Whether through pleasure or by pain  
 I pray that Beauty come again.  
 Or bring she balms my heart to sain,  
 Or heap she up my flaming pyre,  
 I pray that Beauty come again  
 To thrill and fill my life with fire.<sup>54</sup>

Formally, the poem fails – but perhaps intentionally. The repeating lines of a triolet should subtly and cleverly shift their meaning when modified by the other

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<sup>53</sup> Harvey, 'New England' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 3.

<sup>54</sup> Harvey, *Ducks*, p. 19. 'Sain' is an archaic, dialectic word meaning to bless.

lines. Here, 'I pray that Beauty come again / To thrill and fill my life with fire' means exactly the same thing throughout: simply that the speaker sees no adventure, romance, or motivation in life, and wants these to return. That either 'pleasure' or 'pain', or even his own death ('my flaming pyre') could bring 'Beauty' back to his life demonstrates that the speaker is seeking anything that might end the dullness of his current existence. Yet these assertions do not enhance or modify his initial statement; they only reinforce it. This may have been the point of the triolet. As nothing changes in the POW's life – despite his most ardent hopes – nothing changes in the poem's repeating lines either. Harvey wrote in *Comrades in Captivity* that if readers wanted to begin to understand the POW's life, then they must read the book over and over again until they wished to throw it on the floor, and then realise that the POW could not simply cast away the cause of his repetitive, eventless days. Worse than that, he added, was that the reader must not only read his book a thousand times, but 'a thousand times also they must read blank pages. It is the blank page which kills you in the end'.<sup>55</sup> Lack of any emotion whatsoever, no highs or lows, was the POW's bane and the mark of true hopelessness.

Harvey's 'Joy Captive', particularly in its draft form, illustrates how far into hopelessness he had fallen. The poem begins by stating 'Fain would I prison sweet content', and then goes on to describe the speaker's desire to find contentment in idyllic countryside scenes in a state much like the wonder and innocence of childhood.<sup>56</sup> He recognises that even poetry fails to crystallise moments of happiness, hence the opening line's statement that 'sweet content' cannot be imprisoned with him. The second half of the poem describes

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<sup>55</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 306.

<sup>56</sup> Harvey, *Ducks*, pp. 35-37.

memories of the wonders found in a rural arcadia through the changing seasons. In the second and third draft stanzas, cut entirely before publication, the speaker wishes that 'wonder' 'should as an insect lodged in amber / Lie prisoned with its mysteries'.<sup>57</sup> The word 'prisoned' links the poem with Harvey's actual surroundings. The wonder that Harvey misses can never match his own figurative state of suspended animation – wonder and content pass on with time, while he is still trapped. That he cannot preserve these emotions through poetry and memory is shown in the draft's next lines:

So in a frail transparency  
Of poet's music should I find  
For ever healing of the mind.<sup>58</sup>

'Should' indicates that he wishes to but cannot.

The published version ends with a wish for 'An end of old ignoble wars', a statement out of character with the poem's pastoral theme – unless one understands that it is war that has stolen the speaker's contentment and kept him from his beloved land.<sup>59</sup> The manuscript draft continues where the published version ends, with the speaker wishing that he could at least

'gainst the stupid-cruel ways  
Of man, the menace of my days  
And the dire threat of death, upraise  
The sword of joy, and rhythmic praise.<sup>60</sup>

Man's ability to inflict pain and death through war is the one thing keeping him from his happiness, and if he could 'prison sweet content' he would use it in poetry ('rhythmic praise') to fight against this evil. He ends the poem by stating that, if this were possible, he would

in a frail transparency  
Of poet's music haply find

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<sup>57</sup> Harvey, *Ducks*, pp. 35-37; Harvey, 'New England' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 3.

<sup>58</sup> Harvey, 'New England' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 3.

<sup>59</sup> Harvey, *Ducks*, p. 37.

<sup>60</sup> Harvey, 'New England' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 3.

Some healing for the soul in me,  
And certain solace to the mind.<sup>61</sup>

But as the manuscript poem has made clear, he cannot find this. Harvey's great joy in life and his *raison d'être* was poetry; but that even poetry was not enough to heal the wounding of his spirit amounted to true hopelessness.

### ***The Morning Walk***

Harvey must have found some joy in late February 1918, when he was transferred, along with a group consisting mostly of convicted escapers, to the *Offiziersgefangenenlager* at Bad-Colberg.<sup>62</sup> He described it as a 'good camp', with decent facilities, to include steam-heating for their rooms (as 'Bad' in the name implied, it had once been a thermal spa), a garden, and pretty countryside that the officers were allowed to explore under parole or escort. Unfortunately, it too had a bad commandant, who, Harvey claimed, was not so much bad as 'stupid' and furthermore was 'under the thumb and intellect of his Adjutant, Captain Beetz, whom [Harvey] believe[d] to be the worst man in Germany'.<sup>63</sup> Though Beetz did not gain the public notoriety of Niemeyer, his actions would justify Harvey's hatred.

Despite Beetz's negative influence, some of the good spirit of Gütersloh and Crefeld was found again, as Harvey was reunited with many of his comrades from those camps. Furthermore, the *Gefangenenlager* had a good camp paper, *The Morning Walk* – so titled because each issue was hung on a wall outside the pump-room in the morning to be read by passers-by.<sup>64</sup> The paper was started by POWs at Ströhen, who brought it with them to Bad-

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 246.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., pp. 247-48.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 255.

Colberg. No individual issues are known to survive, although a 'Souvenir Number' produced at Bad-Colberg and printed by a local printer still exists. It contained reprints of material from previous issues, selected to be 'the most typical of the dominant note of the paper'.<sup>65</sup> Five pages of material are Harvey's, including his poems 'If We Return' and 'What We Think Of', and the previously unpublished 'Ducks'. An article in the issue describes a cricket match between officers from two different barracks buildings, which shows that Harvey represented 'The Main Building' team well.<sup>66</sup> There is little doubt that he remained a popular figure in the camp, as a caricature illustration of him labelled 'The Poet' is included in the issue, along with caricatures of other popular officers. The drawing shows a typically untidy Harvey: he wears his army breeches like shorts, with no puttees covering his calves.<sup>67</sup> More telling, however, is the fact that the artist drew him looking much older than his years; Harvey was only twenty-nine, but in the drawing he looks more like forty, indicating the strain of captivity.

Also included in *The Morning Walk* souvenir number was part one of an essay series by Harvey titled 'Poetry of the Great War'.<sup>68</sup> This was his own critical account of the poetry that had come out of the war so far, selected from a range of poets. The typescript exists in Harvey's papers and includes the second and third parts of the essay, which were presumably also printed in the regular editions of *The Morning Walk*. As the typescript of 'Part I' is identical to the published version (aside from an obvious typographical error), it is a safe assumption that the typescripts of the remaining parts are reliable duplicates of

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<sup>65</sup> Walker and Rogers, p. 3, TJUM.

<sup>66</sup> E.B. Clarke, 'Cricket', *The Morning Walk – A Journal of Prisoners of War in Germany*, Souvenir Number, 1918, pp. 63-65, TJUM.

<sup>67</sup> Walker and Rogers, p. 28, TJUM.

<sup>68</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Poetry of the Great War', *The Morning Walk – A Journal of Prisoners of War in Germany*, Souvenir Number, 1918, pp. 27-30, TJUM.

what was published. The first and third sections of the essay are titled 'Poetry of the Great War – Part I' and 'Poetry of the Great War – Part II' respectively, while the middle section of the essay is titled 'Beer Poetry', and was intended as a humorous interlude between the two parts on war poetry. (Harvey also stated therein that he was waiting for mail from home, which would contain copies of other war poems that he had collected and intended to cite in the final section.)<sup>69</sup>

The first part contains only three poems, as Harvey wrote it without any reference material. It is known that he had a great ability to memorise poems, as recitation of 'The Pied Piper of Hamelin' at Rossall School had proved. He seems to have written out these three poems in full from memory, as indicated by a few mistakes that he would not have made with printed copies in front of him. These errors are identical in both his typescript and in the published version. The most telling is his complete omission of line nineteen in Hardy's 'Men Who March Away' ('Her distress would leave us rueing:'), while his use of 'March' (instead of 'Press') in line twenty-six indicates that he memorised it from its first publication in the *Times* on 9 September 1914.<sup>70</sup> For Rupert Brooke's 'IV. The Dead' Harvey added a comma in line eight before the first occurrence of 'and', while in 'V. The Soldier' he omitted the comma in 'Gave, once' in line six, and substituted a colon for Brooke's semicolon in line thirteen, but otherwise correctly placed the many semicolons in the poem.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'On Modern Poetry'/Poetry of the Great War (author's manuscript), 1918, GA, FWH, D12912/3/3/37. 'Part I' and 'Part II' here will refer only to the sections titled 'Poetry of the Great War – Part I' and 'Poetry of the Great War – Part II'. The middle section, 'Beer Poetry', is not referred to again.

<sup>70</sup> Harvey, 'Poetry of the Great War', 1918, GA, FWH, D12912/3/3/37; Stallworthy, pp. 160-61; Thomas Hardy, 'Song of the Soldiers', *The Times*, 9 September 1914, p. 9, *The Times Digital Archive* online.

<sup>71</sup> Harvey, 'Poetry of the Great War', 1918, GA, FWH, D12912/3/3/37; Rupert Brooke, '1914' – *Five Sonnets* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd., 1915), pp. 4-5.

The essay contains an impressive selection of poems: with the exception of the final two, those selected continue to appear in many First World War anthologies. They are:

| <b>Table I: Contents of Harvey's 'Poetry of the Great War' (1917)</b> |   |
|---|---|
| Poem Title  | Author  |
| Part One  |   |
| 'Men Who March Away'  | Thomas Hardy  |
| 'IV. The Dead'  | Rupert Brooke                                       |
| 'V. The Soldier'  | Rupert Brooke                                       |
| Part Two  |   |
| 'For the Fallen'  | Laurence Binyon                                     |
| 'August 1914'   | John Masefield                                      |
| 'Before Action'   | W.N. Hodgson  |
| 'Into Battle'   | Julian Grenfell                                     |
| 'The Question'  | Wilfrid Gibson                                      |
| 'Epitaph – On a Child Left Buried<br>Abroad'                          | Eleanor Jenkins                                     |
| 'Jesus, whose lot with us was cast'<br>[first line]                   | Anonymous [found on a dead soldier at<br>Gallipoli] |

The market was flooded with war-inspired verse at the time Harvey was writing, much of which has now been forgotten. Harvey sifted through these to select the best. The selection was not the work of any professional critic, a fact for which he is somewhat apologetic in 'Part II': 'Jealousy for the reputation of modern poetry compels the author to say that this little essay is in no way an offspring of research or special study but rather the love-child of a soldier's

occasional reading'.<sup>72</sup> His selections of Hardy, Masfield, and Brooke required little imagination – their reputations were already sealed. His choices of Grenfell, Gibson, and especially Hodgson show more original thought. Harvey's selection predicts some of the most recent anthologies, in its attempts to include selections from both soldier-poets and non-combatants, as well as the voice of a woman.

Harvey argues in part two of his essay for a widely-inclusive selection of poets whose work best represents war poetry. He first notes that many of the poets in his selection are also soldiers (and much like modern literary scholars, he feels it necessary to highlight that many of them were decorated), but adds that 'there are many others at home, whom Fortune, for one reason or another of her reasons, has prevented from carrying a rifle, who have dignified the life and death of a soldier with lovely lines'.<sup>73</sup> Extending this to include poetry from a female non-combatant was somewhat bold given his all-male, former-combatant audience. Harvey was probably introduced to Jenkins's work when they both were included in *A Selection of Poems from Recent Volumes Published by Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd*, with her poem that he selected appearing therein, just after his own poems.<sup>74</sup> It is a curious choice: 'Epitaph – On a Child Left Buried Abroad' is clearly about a young boy who has died, as she refers to 'a little one in alien earth laid low'.<sup>75</sup> He gives no explanation for his choice in this essay, only introducing the poem with 'A woman is the author of this very understanding little poem on a child left buried abroad', and writes nothing further on it.<sup>76</sup> The poem asks God to 'Send some kind angel when thy trumpets

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<sup>72</sup> Harvey, 'Poetry of the Great War', 1918, GA, FWH, D12912/3/3/37.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> *A Selection of Poems*, pp. 10-13.

<sup>75</sup> Eleanor Jenkins, *Poems* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd., 1916), p. 38.

<sup>76</sup> Harvey, 'Poetry of the Great War', 1918, GA, FWH, D12912/3/3/37.



blow / Lest he should wake alone, and be afraid'; Harvey must have felt that there was a correlation between the child's family and the thoughts of families in Britain whose soldier sons were buried overseas.<sup>77</sup> While that poem's status as a war poem is debatable, it was published in a collection titled *Poems* that contained many war poems, including her 'Dulce et Decorum Est', which predates Wilfred Owen in its taking a critical view of Horace's phrase.<sup>78</sup> It may be that the child elegy was the only poem by Jenkins to which he had access when writing the essay, although he may have previously read and appreciated some of her war poetry and wanted to present her work as an example of how inclusive war poetry could be, stretching his definition in order to accommodate her. Still, there are other indications that Harvey had access to more of her poems at the time, and that they were an influence on his work. Two poems in her collection *Poetry* share titles and themes with poems Harvey would publish that next year in *Ducks*: 'Requiescat' and 'Ecce Homo!'<sup>79</sup> Another of her poems, 'A Legend of Ypres', is a variation on the popular story that had spread throughout English society of an angelic host (sometimes even the ghosts of archers from Agincourt) protecting English soldiers, similar to Harvey's poem 'The Stranger' in *Gloucestershire Friends*.<sup>80</sup> Harvey was a feminist, as his scrapbooks contain many articles on women's rights – a belief no doubt influenced by the strong example of his mother. His decision to be sure to include a woman in the essay was a nod towards those beliefs.

The essay also shows the influence of Harvey's 'New England' theories. He opens Part I by asserting that the war – and poetry about the war – would make people reflect on the many struggles and inequalities of regular life:

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<sup>77</sup> Jenkins, p. 38.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>79</sup> Jenkins, p. 11, p. 22; Harvey, *Ducks*, p. 80, p. 87.

<sup>80</sup> Jenkins, p. 13; Seal, *Soldier's Press*, p. 53; Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, p. 69.

War is an experience, and, as such, stands as good a chance of being made an art-medium as any other incident of human life. It is not in any way better fitted to be so used.

But it is so tragic!            Was Peace not tragic?

It is so heroic!            Were not the lives and deaths of men in their common duties: – lives and deaths of common fellows freezing around the Dogger Bank to supply our tables with fish: sweating and glistening in ill-lighted mines, so that we might be comfortably warm while we ate? Were not - - - - - but enough!

War may, and mercifully does, open foolish eyes to the heroism of life – its beauty, its horror, its undying romance. These things are ever to be seen, and the soldier-poet finds in war only a corroboration of what he has always known and felt.<sup>81</sup>

Harvey believed that the war had created a shared suffering among most of the citizens of Europe, and he hoped that this would awaken an empathy in them that would lead to increased compassion for all. This was yet another reason for him to use his platform as a soldier-poet to begin advocating social reform through verse. Seeing British men of all classes united in a common cause to fight Germany, and again seeing men of various nations united in POW camps to defy their captors, had helped Harvey to feel that a united battle could also be waged against inequality.

One thing that united POWs was defiance of captors, through escape attempts or other means. Second Lieutenant Harold Medlicott is estimated to have attempted more escapes than any other British or Commonwealth serviceman (fourteen in total), often accompanied by Captain Joseph Walter.<sup>82</sup>

Both were killed in an escape attempt near Bad Colberg on 21 May 1918.<sup>83</sup>

Harvey and Medlicott were probably friends, as they lived in the same building and played in its cricket team together.<sup>84</sup> Harvey generally left it to other authors to enumerate the dishonourable acts of German officers such as Niemeyer and

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<sup>81</sup> Harvey, 'Poetry of the Great War', 1918, GA, FWH, D12912/3/3/37.

<sup>82</sup> Lewis-Stempel, p. 196, p. 202; Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 287

<sup>83</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 287.

<sup>84</sup> Clarke, pp. 64-65.

Beetz. He made an exception in this case. *Comrades in Captivity* spells out in detail how the men were most likely murdered following recapture, by hand-picked guards under unofficial orders from Beetz, who had grown tired of their escapes.<sup>85</sup> Harvey made his reason for writing about this incident clear: 'To pay tribute to the bravery of two men who died in service for their country as surely as if they had fallen on the battlefields of France'.<sup>86</sup> The statement betrays Harvey's suspicion that POWs were not held as equal contributors to the war effort. He would work for the rest of his life to ensure that POWs received the same recognition as other combat veterans.

On or around 20 June 1918, Harvey was informed that, after 22 months of confinement, he was on the list of prisoners to be transferred to the neutral Netherlands. Agreements had been negotiated between the British and German governments for interning equal numbers of POWs of similar ranks in neutral countries at the expense of their home governments. Prior to 1917, POWs who were gravely ill or wounded could be interned in neutral countries; the 1917 agreement allowed for prisoners with over eighteen months of confinement who were suffering from 'barbed-wire disease' also to be moved, while the 1918 agreement extended it to all POWs held over eighteen months.<sup>87</sup> The Netherlands and Switzerland both volunteered to take POWs. Once there, prisoners were to be confined to general localities, but with much more freedom than they had in camps. If a soldier attempted to escape from the neutral territory they would be returned to confinement in enemy territory, even by their own government.<sup>88</sup> It was, in essence, a form of parole available for all ranks,

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<sup>85</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 287-90.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 290.

<sup>87</sup> George Phillimore and Hugh Bellot, 'Treatment of POWs', *Transactions of the Grotius Society*, 5 (1919), 47-64, (51-53).

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

and beneficial to all parties. For the UK, this meant removing its soldiers from the harsh conditions of Prussian discipline, and for Germany it meant that fewer of its rapidly-dwindling food resources (owing to the British blockade) had to be used on British prisoners. For the Dutch and the Swiss governments, it meant an increase in foreign income.

For Harvey, the agreement allowed escape from a life that had driven him to despair. He later stated his thought on learning of his transfer: 'I was delighted, and so (I think) were some of the Germans. By this time I was heartily sick of them and their country. To get out of it seemed too good to be true'.<sup>89</sup> He must have been in heightened spirits as he left Bad-Colberg, as he later recalled thinking that the guards who transported his group of officers to the train station were 'amiable men', even though he was reminded of German brutality during the journey, when the guards pointed out the woods where Medlicott and Walter had been shot.<sup>90</sup>

Unfortunately, Harvey's thought that it 'seemed too good to be true' was partially right. On 24 June, his group arrived at Aachen POW camp, within miles of the Dutch border, and were told that they would be moved into the Netherlands within the week. Day after day they remained at Aachen, until the days became weeks; Harvey stated that the failure to be quickly released 'was in many ways the greatest disappointment that befell us in captivity'.<sup>91</sup> Some officers decided to attempt escape, inspired by the proximity of the border. Others felt that this was dishonourable, given that they had been moved so close to neutral territory only for the purpose of neutral internment. For Harvey, this argument lost all merit when he was informed that he was to be moved on

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<sup>89</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 294-95.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 295-96.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 297.

16 August to yet another German POW camp, instead of the Netherlands. He had developed an escape plan, but he allowed another officer to use it first, believing it only fair as the man had been in captivity for nearly four years. This involved using a wire-cable to climb out of a window into some bushes. The man successfully escaped, but unfortunately his weight damaged the windowsill. This was discovered the next day by the guards, who then made it impossible to use the same technique again. On the night of 15-16 August, Harvey and a friend attempted to escape by climbing over a wall, but were caught in the act by a German NCO. Fortunately, they were able to buy his silence, and the next morning they were transferred as planned.<sup>92</sup>

Harvey then arrived at his seventh *Offiziersgefangenenlager*, on an island in the Baltic near Stralsund. This drove Harvey to his lowest despair so far; he later wrote 'my chief impression [of the Stralsund camp] is one of wired-in green mould upon a sunset'.<sup>93</sup> He stopped shaving, and spent days in bed reading a dictionary and writing out words that struck him as interesting.<sup>94</sup> The notebook that he copied those words into still exists among his papers. It stands as the ultimate visual example of how deep into depression, and even madness, Harvey had fallen. He filled forty-eight pages from top to bottom with words copied from *Chambers 20<sup>th</sup> Century Dictionary of the English Language*.<sup>95</sup> Viewing any one of these pages – and knowing how they came to be filled – causes unease, as thousands of words in alphabetical order are scrawled, sometimes very methodically and at other times erratically, on the pages like a mental map of obsession and despair. It is a glimpse into Harvey's

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., pp. 298-01.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., p. 202.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., pp. 303-04.

<sup>95</sup> F.W. Harvey's notebook kept at Stralsund POW Camp, September 1918, GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 6.

'green mould', psychologists' 'barbed-wire disease'. After he finished, Harvey tallied the list at 8,643 words.<sup>96</sup> This was not the amusement of a healthy mind, but a way to fill waking hours by keeping the mind occupied and away from despair. His focus on this single task was clear: his handwriting is, for the most part, unusually legible. He was allowing no distractions and in no hurry.

Harvey stated in his memoirs that he still managed to write some decent poetry at Stralsund, naming 'A Memory' and 'The Treasury', both poems that would be published in *Ducks*.<sup>97</sup> While no manuscripts of these survive, the first draft of the *Ducks* poem 'Song' is found in his notebook following his list of words, confirming that he was writing poetry at this time.<sup>98</sup> This poem reinforces 'Joy Captive' in its implication that Harvey was having difficulty finding peace and inspiration through verse. It looks forward to a day when he no longer has to 'strive to mimic / The beauty that [he] find[s]', when he can instead 'lie in a dream and open wide [his] heart' – this being no dream but a reality that will seem too good to be true.<sup>99</sup> Before this dream becomes reality, he can only struggle to recreate his love of the countryside through verse, or 'strive to mimic' it. When he is finally free he will find 'peace' and 'joy of joyous things' that will lead him to

make a singing of long-forgotten things,  
And long-forgotten pain,  
Of a heart broken and mended with Beauty in a place  
Where troubled dreams all ended.<sup>100</sup>

Harvey saw his homecoming as a dream that would end a nightmare. He hoped that returning home would heal his psychological wounds, although he indicates

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 304-05; Harvey, *Ducks*, p. 50, p. 63.

<sup>98</sup> Notebook kept at Stralsund, September 1918, GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 6.

<sup>99</sup> Harvey, *Ducks*, p. 66.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

a realisation that this could never entirely happen, as ‘singing of [...] long-forgotten pain’ shows – one can’t sing about what is forgotten.

The two poems that Harvey claimed that he wrote at this time, ‘The Treasury’ and ‘A Memory’, somewhat contradict ‘Song’ by asserting that memory can be an effective substitution for reality. Harvey stated in *Comrades in Captivity* that the two poems are an example of that ‘strange thing, this power of poetry, to substitute life, or recreate it, when life has failed us’.<sup>101</sup> Indeed, ‘A Memory’ is one of Harvey’s best poems from this time and is convincing in its argument. It begins with the speaker in despair and seeking solace from the past:

Now joy is dead and hope o’ercast  
I call a dream out of the past  
And thus command him: ‘Slave, go bring  
Out of my days, one day in Spring!  
And out of *that* a certain hour  
Which glimmers through an April shower.’<sup>102</sup>

Unlike ‘Song’ where only reality can bring happiness, in this poem the speaker’s command is obeyed:

‘Tis done. In one great surge  
Of Time the Past and Present merge:  
For time is not a drifting river,  
A moment here, then past for ever –  
And what is done in the heart’s deep core  
Is done not once, but for evermore.’<sup>103</sup>

‘[H]eart’s deep core’ clearly alludes to Yeats’s ‘The Lake Isle of Innisfree’, in which the speaker feels a desire ‘in the deep heart’s core’ to retreat from the city to a pastoral idyll.<sup>104</sup> Harvey’s speaker is now torn from his beloved idyll, and finds that emotions experienced there are seared in his memory forever.

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<sup>101</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 305.

<sup>102</sup> Harvey, *Ducks*, p. 63.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Edward Larrissy, ed., *W.B. Yeats – The Major Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 20.

Memory becomes reality, and the defeat of the present is replaced by the conquest of the past, as in the speaker's heart he still kisses his lover 'Upon a rainy April hill'.<sup>105</sup> Likewise, 'The Treasury' opens with a speaker in a dire present, as it is implied that he is a prisoner:

I have such joy in my heart's coffer,  
Little I care what Life may offer;  
Little it matters if I lie  
In dungeons, who possess the sky.<sup>106</sup>

This speaker, too, finds solace through memory, as in his 'heart there hangs a key [...] called Memory' that can unlock the 'delight' of the past.<sup>107</sup> While 'Song' suggests that the speaker will no longer have to 'strive to mimic' beauty when dreams become reality, 'The Treasury' claims that dreams and reality are the same: the speaker states that 'in dreadful days' he can find refuge in his own heart where he can '[break] off the seal / Of that Dream-box, whose dreams are real'.<sup>108</sup> In doing so, the speaker finds relief, despite life's harsh realities.

Harvey chose to use the optimistic 'A Memory' and 'The Treasury' in *Comrades in Captivity* to demonstrate how poetry and memory could bring happiness in even the worst conditions. This may have been true at times, although 'Song' shows that occasionally Harvey doubted that anything other than release could lift him from the despair of captivity. Selectively choosing two poems to make his case, while ignoring the third, reflects his earlier decision to claim that 'Solitary Confinement' was a flash of poetic inspiration written in – and lifting his spirit from – his initial captivity. Both are only half-truths: 'Solitary Confinement' was barely drafted as a relief from the shock of initial captivity,

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<sup>105</sup> Harvey, *Ducks*, p. 63.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*



and finished when he was in a better state of mind, just as 'Song' shows that his poetry late in confinement did not offer complete relief.

Finally, Harvey and half of his party were returned to Aachen for a few days, before being sent over to Scheveningen, in The Hague. (Harvey believed he had arrived at a later date, but an article from the *Times* shows that he reached The Hague on 12 October 1918).<sup>109</sup> He stated later that he remembered seeing the railway sleepers change 'from iron to wood (the escaper's invariable assurance that he is "over")'.<sup>110</sup> Harvey's delight at seeing these wooden sleepers stuck with him as truly joyous, and featured as the climactic moment of his novel. In the scene, Will and Gypsy have escaped their work-camp, and have been travelling by foot for weeks to reach Holland. Exhausted to the point that both are near collapse, they are finally spotted by German sentries and chased. They run, are shot at, and dive to the ground atop a railway embankment. Gypsy informs Will that she is too weak to stand, and that he must leave her. Will reaches down and realises that he feels wood instead of iron below him, and in exhilaration stands and exclaims at the top of his voice, 'Yes, they are wood!', knowing that they are both now safe and free.<sup>111</sup> Gypsy represented the goodness of England and love of life that kept Harvey going through the war and captivity; that she is shown nearly to give up while on the cusp of freedom represents Harvey's own utter despair just before his release.

In his memoirs, Harvey wrote of Dutch schoolchildren cheering and blowing kisses to the British officers as they arrived, and of being whisked away

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<sup>109</sup> 'Officers Interned in Holland', *The Times*, 16 October 1918, found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'I', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/7, fol. 17.

<sup>110</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 307.

<sup>111</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 284, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

to get drunk by comrades who had preceded him to Holland – the drinking being thinly veiled in his memoirs.<sup>112</sup>

But if this was the high-point of Harvey's POW experience, his lowest point – even lower than his disappointment at Aachen – soon came. Shortly after arriving in the Netherlands, he received a letter from his mother dated 17 October 1918. She begins by stating her elation to learn that he is out of Germany.<sup>113</sup> One can imagine that, as Harvey scanned the letter on opening it, the words she was preparing him for had already jumped to his attention: 'I know it will grieve you, & it hurts me so to have to tell it – Our dear Eric fell in action on Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>'.<sup>114</sup> Any joy that Harvey had found by leaving Germany was quickly taken from him. For nearly two years, POW guilt had haunted his thoughts and his poetry, caused by knowing that his 'friends and brothers' were "out there" killing and being killed' while he was 'futile' as a non-combatant.<sup>115</sup> This guilt came to its ultimate, dreadful apex with the death in combat of his brother.

Harvey wished he could die in Eric's place. Fifteen years later in 1933, when visiting Eric's old college, Brasenose, at Oxford, he was reported to have said to a friend 'They shot the wrong one'.<sup>116</sup> The way in which Harvey depicted Eric's death in his later prose works is telling of just how much guilt this event caused him. His war novel became his way to right this wrong in his imagination. He did not go so far as to save Eric from his fate, but he did at least fix the injustice of his own personal safety at the time of Eric's death. When Eric is killed in the novel, Will is still at the front, and in the same shell-

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<sup>112</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 308-11.

<sup>113</sup> Matilda Harvey to F.W. Harvey, 17 October 1918, GA, FWH, D12912/1/1/70.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 27.

<sup>116</sup> Boden, pp. 308-09.

hole.<sup>117</sup> The brothers, along with Gypsy, have been isolated behind a German counterattack, after a failed British offensive. They begin crawling out one by one to reach friendly lines. First Gypsy goes, then Will, and finally Eric. But as Eric attempts to crawl out, he is shot: 'Eric lifted his head and then sprawled back into the hole having taken the bullet meant for his brother'.<sup>118</sup> That Harvey wrote that the bullet was meant for Will is very much in line with his statement made at Oxford. It is only after this event in the novel that Will Harvey is captured, now that the closest of all his comrades can no longer be protected. This seems to have been Harvey's fictional atonement for not being able to fight – and perhaps die – alongside his brother and other comrades. Conversely, in *Comrades in Captivity*, he does not mention Eric's death at all. The event seems to have been too painful for him to approach in any other way than fiction – a fiction that sees him as anything but a helpless non-combatant at the time of Eric's death.

In reality, Eric was killed in one of the final offensives of the war, while serving with 2/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters. Eric, too, had earned a reputation as an officer who led from the front and took risks in the field. He had been awarded the MC in 1916 for a bombing raid, was later invalided home for shell-shock and trench-fever, returned to the front, was promoted to captain, and in May 1918 made a company commander. Weeks before his death he earned a Bar to his MC when, as his company was nearly surrounded and under heavy fire, he ran through the enemy fire to link up with a friendly battalion that was assaulting towards his company's position, to ensure that they did not mistakenly fire on his troops.<sup>119</sup> Given this impressive performance in combat, it is not hard to

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<sup>117</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 234, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Matilda Harvey to Edmund Ross-Barker, 6 May 1919, Abingdon School Archives, online at [http://www.abingdon.org.uk/index.php/captain\\_eric\\_howard\\_harvey\\_mc\\_and\\_bar](http://www.abingdon.org.uk/index.php/captain_eric_howard_harvey_mc_and_bar).

understand how Harvey's guilt at surviving, while his younger brother did not, might also be compounded by the fact that he looked up to Eric in many ways. Indeed, three of Harvey's four best friends – Eric, R.E. Knight, and Hugh Walker – were strikingly similar men who shared many traits that Harvey admired. All three were tall, powerfully built, exceptional athletes: Eric rowed for Oxford, Knight was an Oxford Blue cross-country runner, and Walker was a Scottish international field-hockey player and Olympian.<sup>120</sup> All were exceptional and brave leaders: Knight as demonstrated by the DCM incident, and Eric with his exceptional combat record, while Walker's own capture was the result of going into no-man's-land alone to aid a British patrol that had become trapped outside their own trench's wire.<sup>121</sup> All three were well-educated, and had interests in poetry and literature – although they were not poets themselves. Literary ability was the one area in which Harvey led these men, and which – along with musical ability – set Gurney apart from them. Knight's and Walker's similarities to Eric seem to indicate that Harvey was always seeking a surrogate brother, not only for fraternal camaraderie, but also because he wished to be near men who could challenge him and drive him to excel athletically and mentally. Harvey later sent a typed copy of an article that he had written on Eric to a committee that was compiling records for a history of the 2/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters during the war. In it he claimed that Knight and Eric 'were utterly unlike', aside from 'a steadfast devotion to duty'.<sup>122</sup> Yet he went on to add that both had a 'happiness that radiated from them to their fellow man. From the one in a

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<sup>120</sup> Roger Deeks, 'The Comrades in Captivity', in *Comrades in Captivity – A Record of Life in Seven German Prison Camps*, by F.W. Harvey, New Edition (Coleford: Douglas McLean Publishing, 2012), p. 332.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 332-33.

<sup>122</sup> F.W. Harvey to T.H. Gurney, 13 August 1929, GA, Gloucestershire Regiment, 2/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Collection, D2431.3.

sparkling gaiety. From the other in a steady glowing tenderness'.<sup>123</sup> Harvey may have stated that the two men were unlike, yet he still could not separate them in memory:

Whenever I think of my brother I think also of another great friend who died gallantly in the war[,] R.E. Knight D.C.M.

Of the latter it is not my duty to write. Yet I cannot help naming him. I am surprised that I cannot help it.<sup>124</sup>

Harvey may not have realised himself how alike his fraternal feelings for both men were, and how similarly he viewed them. The loss of Knight may have driven Harvey to attempt his near-suicidal daylight raid, just as the loss of Eric would drive Harvey to his lowest despair as a POW. Soon Harvey would lose Gurney to the asylum, leaving only Walker, who would become the most steadfast and loyal of Harvey's lifetime friends.

Harvey and his comrades were not surprised when the armistice came on 11 November, as 'for more than a year [they] had seen the German people gradually starving'.<sup>125</sup> *The Times* ran an editorial that day which included quotations from the Archbishop of Canterbury's sermon of the previous day (the armistice came on a Monday), in which he called on the British people to build a lasting peace by channelling their energies towards reconciliation and understanding. He underpinned his argument by quoting Harvey's 'If We Return':

The war, which perforce cut rudely across our ordinary life and suspended countless things for good and ill, has obliterated many a barrier and sundering line, and men who had little in common have learned to know and understand one another as never before. Is that experience to be barren of fruit? Are we to drift unheedingly or helplessly into dangers which need not be? God forbid. Are we to slip back quietly into the prosaic paths of pre-war days? One of the brilliant band of soldier poets at the front has asked, and answered, the question –

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 311.

If we return, will England be  
 Just England still to you and me?  
 The place where we must earn our bread?  
 We, who have walked among the dead,  
 And watched the smile of agony,  
 And seen the price of liberty,  
 Which we have taken carelessly  
 From other hands.

We need something, we shall secure something, nobler, larger, worthier than that.<sup>126</sup>

A copy of the article exists in one of Harvey's scrapbooks.<sup>127</sup> He would have been pleased to learn that the message of his poem of two years earlier had been taken to heart by such an influential figure, and used, on a day when such a message would resonate with many, to advocate an improved society that would prevent future bloodshed. It is a testament to Harvey's contemporary cultural impact.

After the armistice, Harvey was assigned to work at a camp near Leeuwarden, aiding in the repatriation of POWs flooding in from Germany. Harvey hated the city, lambasting it in verse with his 'Ballade of Leeuwarden'. The poem claims that God created the world like a painter, occasionally 'Rub[bing] out a line or two because / 'Twould mar the picture', so God 'covered over [Leeuwarden] carefully' with the sea.<sup>128</sup> He claims that it was unfortunate that the Dutch reversed this with their land reclamation. Implied anti-Semitism occurs in Harvey's poetry here again, when he states that the engineer who did so was 'undoubtedly a German Jew'.<sup>129</sup> If Harvey had been reading distributist literature at this time, he may have been influenced by Chesterton's distrust of Judaism: 'The Jews in the Middle Ages were as powerful as they were

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<sup>126</sup> 'Hush Before the Dawn. Primate on the Work of Peace.', *The Times*, 11 November 1918, p. 6, *The Times Digital Archive Online*.

<sup>127</sup> 'Hush Before the Dawn. Primate on the Work of Peace.', *The Times*, 11 November 1918, p. 6, found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'N', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/11, fol. 12.

<sup>128</sup> Harvey, *Ducks*, p. 61.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

unpopular. They were the capitalists of the age'.<sup>130</sup> Distributism argued that the Middle Ages were the high point of English social equality, which was destroyed by the advent of capitalism and the industrial revolution.<sup>131</sup> As capitalism was argued by distributists to be a path towards slavery, this accusation against Jews is serious, and Harvey may have believed it. His vitriol takes him so far as to call the city's inhabitants 'staring cow-like human creatures[...] cow-like of mind and with cow-like features', before capping it off by calling it 'A wicked town of no renown, / The loathsome city of Leeuwarden'.<sup>132</sup> These are harsh words for a man often seen as kind-hearted, and whose poetry at this time had begun to advocate greater understanding between all people. This contradiction is indicative of his extremely degraded mental state. He printed the poem in *Comrades in Captivity* as well as *Ducks*, claiming that his hatred was in part because he caught the Spanish flu, and spent a good deal of money there. (The poem also implied that the town was full of crooks.)<sup>133</sup> One would expect the recently released POW to think more highly of the place where he finally regained freedom – after all, as of the armistice Harvey was no longer a POW in the Netherlands, but merely an officer fulfilling an assignment to aid former POWs. It is more than likely that the depression caused by his brother's death led him to resent a nation that did not join in the fight against Germany – a nation whose families did not risk their own sons and daughters, but still profited from internment of POWs.

Harvey also claimed that his bitterness came from the fact that 'Holland might be a sight better than Germany, but it was hardly [home]'.<sup>134</sup> Yet, in

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<sup>130</sup> G.K. Chesterton, *A Short History of England* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1917), p. 108.

<sup>131</sup> Cheyette, p. 144.

<sup>132</sup> Harvey, *Ducks*, p. 61.

<sup>133</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 312-13; Harvey, *Ducks*, pp. 61-62.

<sup>134</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 313.

reality, Harvey had tried to avoid returning to Gloucestershire after the war. On 20 November he submitted his name as a volunteer to join the forces of the North Russia Expedition – Britain (with Commonwealth forces), America, and France's military mission to ensure that arms and equipment sent to aid the Tsarist government against Germany did not instead fall into the hands of Bolsheviks.<sup>135</sup> In his appendix to the newest edition of *Comrades in Captivity*, Roger Deeks comments on Harvey's volunteering, and theorises – probably correctly – that this reluctance to return home was caused by an unwillingness to face the emotional fallout of Eric's death in the family.<sup>136</sup> Moreover, his POW guilt may have affected him, leading him to believe that his family would judge him for being a prisoner when Eric was killed – perhaps compounded by Harvey's sense of duty as the eldest brother. Volunteering may have been his attempt to atone for this guilt by seeking further combat service, encouraged in the fact that Hugh Walker had volunteered and been accepted.<sup>137</sup>

Still, by mid-December, the War Office had denied his request on the grounds that all positions for officers were already filled.<sup>138</sup> So, in January of 1919, after an absence of two years and seven months, Harvey returned home.

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<sup>135</sup> F.W. Harvey to SBO Scheveningen, 20 November 1918, GA, FWH, D12912/7/2.

<sup>136</sup> Deeks, p. 333.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> War Office to F.W. Harvey, 19 December 1918, GA, FWH, D12912/7/2.



## Chapter VI: 'I wished myself once more on lousy straw'

January 1919 – September 1939

Harvey's desire to delay his return to Gloucestershire by extending his military service was the beginning of a behaviour that continued throughout his life: an inability to let the war go. Many former combatants feel this reluctance, although it is often generalised that veterans of Harvey's generation were not likely to talk about wartime experiences later in life, and so it might seem less apparent than with more recent veterans. Harvey, though, was a man of words, and the war would resurface in his work for the rest of his years. He returned to England in January 1919.<sup>1</sup> He later claimed that he had been shocked by the extreme kindness shown to him and to other POWs –perhaps indicating that he had expected POWs to be held in some disdain.<sup>2</sup> He resumed living at The Redlands, finding his initial period at home blissful, despite suffering from lingering effects of the Spanish flu. He wrote of his joy in *Comrades in Captivity*:

It is wonderful to get home – home: in the grave beauty of the night to lie wakeful, disturbed only by the delicious unrest and distress of the trees – kept awake, as by a lover, all night. It is happiness. There is the moonlight cold and quiet, and the bars of darkness, within the room; and outside in the whiteness of moonshine my dear hills, so blue, phantom-fast and shadowy – the hills that I shall see again (and so changed) at dawn.<sup>3</sup>

As a POW, Harvey had tried to imagine that longed-for homecoming, putting his dreams to verse in such poems as 'The Return', drafted in his 'A New England' manuscript. It was possibly written in the Netherlands; in the poem he anticipates returning to England in springtime – a timeline he might have based on knowledge that his duty helping to repatriate other POWs would keep him abroad until early 1919. It is not very well-written or convincing:

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<sup>1</sup> 'Gloucester Repatriated Prisoners – Entertained by the Mayor and Mayoress', unknown publication, 1 February 1919, found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'I', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/7, fol. 24. Earlier biographies claim he returned in February, although this newspaper article states that he spoke at a banquet in honour of former POWs on 31 January in Gloucester.

<sup>2</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 314.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 316.

'Home again! Home again!  
 Boy-like I sing –  
 Home to old England  
 England in Spring  
  
 Long have I lingered  
 Living apart  
 Hearing your forests  
 Sigh in my heart  
  
 Seeing reflected  
 Clear in the grass  
 Of Sorrow your green  
 Glad glimmering grass  
  
 Far have I journeyed  
 Long did I roam,  
 Welcome old country!  
 Welcome dear home!  
  
 Hail! You blue hilltops  
 Hail! You sunset[?] meadows  
 Welcome old woodlands  
 Woven of shadows!  
  
 'Home again! Home again!  
 Boy-like I sing –  
 Home to old England  
 Home in the Spring!<sup>4</sup>

The descriptions of home show little imagination compared to Harvey's usual poems about Gloucestershire, perhaps because, as his final prison-camp work such as 'Song', 'A Memory', and 'Joy Captive' suggests, he was beginning to lose touch with even his memories of home. The poem would be completely re-written or, perhaps more accurately, replaced by what was published as 'Return' in *Ducks*. 'Return' is not in Harvey's manuscript for 'A New England', and was probably written after his actual return, when he had fully realised all that this return meant. It is far from the prospect of one-dimensional joy offered in 1918's 'The Return'. Instead, it conveys that the joy of homecoming is tainted by the harsh memories of war, and by the veteran's estrangement from society:

This day's worth all the bitterness  
 Of heart and blood, the loneliness

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<sup>4</sup> Harvey, 'New England' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 3.

Of prison days, cold wind and wet  
 Crumbling the sodden parapet,  
 Joy wasted, withered happiness.

Seeing arrayed in Easter dress  
 Those orchards round my home, confess  
 I (mindful of black sorrows yet)  
 This day's worth all.

Fair in this fragrant loveliness  
 Flames my reward – God's tenderness  
 To all our passion and bloody sweat.  
 Therefore though England straight forget  
 Us (war being over) nevertheless  
 This day's worth all.<sup>5</sup>

'Return' is a recognition of the British soldier's one-sided love of country. It acknowledges the 'bitterness', and 'loneliness' of 'prison days' and the hardship of survival in 'sodden' trenches that soldiers endured – only to be forgotten by their countrymen now that their usefulness as warriors is not needed. The enjambments at 'confess / I' and 'forget / Us' separate the speaker from his orchards, and the veterans from England, representing that disconnection between the returning warrior and that which he fought for. Yet for Harvey and other soldiers, it was 'worth all' to see their home safe thanks to their defence of it. 'The Return' simply stated 'Far have I journeyed / Long did I roam', which did not come close to describing the hardship that had to be overcome prior to Harvey's homecoming. 'Return' is not only superior to 'The Return', but it also more wholly encompasses what returning means for a veteran, with a perspective that Harvey could only gain by experiencing it himself.

Harvey began to reintegrate with society, but soon realised that England had, in fact, changed: 'with leisure at last to look at familiar things (now in their full blaze of summer beauty) the final realisation comes in upon the soul of what is implied and effected by *Casualty Lists*; and the first mood is that of [his poem]

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<sup>5</sup> Harvey, *Ducks*, p. 76.

“Lament”<sup>6</sup>. The loss of comrades began to be felt, but earlier than that summer, given that Harvey returned to a home that would have still been in mourning for Eric. ‘Return’, if taken literally, implies that Harvey had already felt a resurgence in mourning for lost comrades as early as Eastertide, as the speaker is ‘mindful of black sorrows’. Aside from his poor physical health, Harvey was still recovering from the psychological trauma of captivity as well. According to Boden, family members felt that there was now ‘something *on* him’, a heaviness of spirit that they could not quite place, which was apparently not seen prior to his capture, even after time in the trenches.<sup>7</sup> Harvey was aware of this change in himself, writing at the time in *Comrades in Captivity* that ‘[captivity] is by far the worst thing that ever happened to me, and a thing from which I shall possibly never recover’.<sup>8</sup> In his ground-breaking psychological study, *Barbed Wire Disease*, A.L. Vischer predicted that POWs would suffer from the after-effects of confinement for the rest of their lives. Harvey was familiar with Vischer’s work, as proven by a newspaper clipping in one of his scrapbooks describing Vischer’s theories.<sup>9</sup> Harvey was acutely aware that his psychological health had been damaged by his experiences.

It may have been in an attempt to exorcize these demons that Harvey committed to projects related to his wartime experience. He worked with Sidgwick & Jackson to complete his third collection, *Ducks, and Other Verses* (1919), which included his final prison-camp poems, along with other poems written after his homecoming. The unevenness in *Ducks* betrayed Harvey’s mental state as a POW. The reviewer for *The Spectator* praised the title poem,

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<sup>6</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 317.

<sup>7</sup> Boden, p. 232.

<sup>8</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 222.

<sup>9</sup> ‘Men Who Hate Their Friends’, unknown publication, [1919], found in F.W. Harvey’s scrapbook ‘I’, GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/7, fol. 94.

but noted that the rest of the volume 'lack[ed] the power of self-criticism' and many of its poems would need some day to be 'severely pruned' from the canon of Harvey's better work.<sup>10</sup> Sales were so poor that Harvey even voluntarily returned his advance to Sidgwick & Jackson, stating 'I will write no poetry that does not pay for itself'.<sup>11</sup> While putting the final touches on *Ducks*, he also threw himself into *Comrades in Captivity – A Record of Life in Seven German Prison Camps* (1920), recalling joyful and painful memories in an act of writing that was probably cathartic.

His plan to complete two books in his first year after release was ambitious, although Harvey was aided by the fact that many – if not most – of the poems in *Ducks* had been written while he was a POW. *Comrades in Captivity* was similarly expedited by Harvey's decision to include lectures, essays, and articles that he had written as a POW, of which he retained copies that are mostly available among his papers today. These account for just over seventy-five pages of content.<sup>12</sup> Another sixteen pages of journal extracts about tunnelling operations were contributed by his friend 'Mossy' [Captain Frederick Moysey].<sup>13</sup> A chapter of ten pages on life at Ströhen POW camp was contributed by his friend 'Little Man' [believed to be Captain George Warner Holloway], while just over six pages of escape notes were provided by an unnamed officer.<sup>14</sup> Use of printed music accounts for a further sixteen pages throughout the book (not including music already incorporated as parts of essays). Altogether these amount to 124 pages, with an additional sixteen

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<sup>10</sup> 'Poets and Poetry. Mr. Harvey's Verse', *The Spectator*, 20 March 1920, pp. 18-19, SA.

<sup>11</sup> F.W. Harvey to Sidgwick & Jackson (MS copy), 5 August 1920, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/101.

<sup>12</sup> These are 'The Case Against Bernard Shaw' (22 pages), 'The Russian Concert' (5 pages), 'On the Comradeship of Men and Books' (21.5 pages), and 'War – Its Causes and Remedy' (27 pages).

<sup>13</sup> Fourteen pages are quoted simultaneously from Moysey's journal in Chapter VIII, while p. 114 and pp. 125-26 contain two further pages of Moysey's notes between them.

<sup>14</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 152-58, pp. 190-200; Deeks, p. 345.

pages given to illustrations (each illustration taking two pages – the reverse always left blank but both still counted against pagination). This means that 140 of the book's 319 pages were already completed by 1919; Harvey would add another 179 pages in total.

Harvey does not seem to have kept a journal – to do so would have been much too deliberate for the impulsive man that he was – so he had nothing of that sort to consult for personal memories. He certainly relied on memoirs by other POWs that had already been published. Many POW stories had appeared in print during the war, primarily by officers with exciting escape stories.

Lieutenant Gerald Featherstone Knight, whose escape is mentioned in the Ströhen chapter of *Comrades in Captivity*, and who was known to Harvey through mutual friends, wrote memoirs of his own capture, confinement, and escape in '*Brother Bosch*', *an Airman's Escape from Germany* (1919). In fact, Harvey received a letter in November 1919 from a POW comrade, Leonard Duke, inquiring after the progress of *Comrades in Captivity*, and informing him that Knight had recently published '*Brother Bosch*'.<sup>15</sup> Harvey's comrade from Schwarmstedt days, J.A.L. Caunter, escaped in 1917 and published his tale before the war was over as *13 Days – The Chronicle of an Escape from a German Prison Camp* (1918).

Harvey relied on *13 Days* to fill gaps in his own memory, as can be seen in a comparison of descriptions of prison-camp rations. Each book describes how new prisoners at Schwarmstedt had to rely on the camp rations while waiting for their parcels from home to arrive. Caunter describes the rations as follows:

The food provided by the Germans at a daily cost to each officer of 1 mark 50 pfennig, comprised the following: *Breakfast*, coffee, of the war variety,

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<sup>15</sup> Leonard Duke to F.W. Harvey, 19 November 1919, GA, FWH, D12912/1/3/13.

probably made with acorns. *Dinner*, soup, always containing lumps of mangel-wurzel, cabbage, black peas, and occasional pieces of potato. Twice or three times a week, tiny shreds of real meat could be discovered in the soup. There was often a liberal ration of grit in this soup, but no extra charge was made on account of that. *The Evening Meal*, soup of the sago or meal variety, generally exceedingly thin.

In addition to these daily rations, we were each allowed to purchase two pounds of war bread per week at 60 pfs. This war bread was exceedingly nasty and doughy. If pressed with the finger the indentation remained, as it does in other putty-like substances.<sup>16</sup>

Harvey's description is close enough to amount to paraphrase:

The daily ration, for which we paid one mark fifty pfennigs, comprised the following:

*Breakfast*: black coffee, made, I believe, from acorns.

*Dinner*: soup, containing cabbage, black peas, mangel-wurzel, occasional pieces of potato, and once or twice a week tiny shreds of meat.

*Supper*: thin soup, more like pig's wash than anything else.

In addition to this, we were allowed to purchase two pounds of war-bread a week at sixty pfennigs. It was nasty sour stuff, and [...] so putty-like that a ball of it rolled and flung against the wall stuck there.<sup>17</sup>

Harvey even copied Caunter's use of italics when naming each meal. He did not refer to *13 Days* as the source of this information, but he did give the book a recommendation two chapters later when discussing escape stories. Harvey's paraphrasing is dangerously close to plagiarism. It is possible that Caunter had read the book and given Harvey advice prior to publication – he was a regular army officer of the 1<sup>st</sup> Gloucesters, so he may have lived locally after the war. Caunter had used Harvey's poem 'Prisoners' in his own book, so the two possibly considered it a fair trade.

The greatest resource – aside from experience – that Harvey had available for writing his memoirs were dozens of newspaper clippings pasted into his scrapbooks regarding officer-POW camps in Germany. Small forms

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<sup>16</sup> Caunter, pp. 74-75.

<sup>17</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 138.

attached to many of the articles indicate that Matilda had subscribed to a few newspaper-cutting services, a common practice of the day. These services would search for keywords (to use the modern term) in current publications at the request of the subscriber, and would then mail the resulting clippings to them.<sup>18</sup> Often, these services would not include the title of the article, the author, or even the newspaper that an article was cut from, replacing all of this information with the name of the cutting service instead.<sup>19</sup> This explains the lack of such details in many of the articles in Harvey's scrapbooks. Matilda certainly had the services searching for any articles mentioning her son, and after his capture she must have asked for any articles to do with officer prison camps as well. She would have been pleased to know that her son consulted them when writing his memoirs.

Harvey's description of the famous Holzminden tunnel escape was lifted nearly verbatim from a newspaper article found in his scrapbook 'I'. The article reads:

Two days before, Niemeyer, boasting of the camp arrangements, had said: 'Well, gentlemen, if you want to escape you must first give me two days' notice.'

They didn't give him notice, but two days later – almost to the hour – twenty-nine officers crawled through the tunnel; and ten of them got clear away to England – a record escape from any camp in Germany during the war.<sup>20</sup>

Harvey's version was slightly modified, but certainly written with an eye on the article:

Two days before[,] Niemeyer, boasting of camp arrangements, had said: 'Well, gentlemen, I guess you know if you want to escape you must give me a couple of days' notice!' Notice was not given, but two days later, almost to the hour, twenty-nine officers crawled out through the sap, and

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<sup>18</sup> Ellen Gruber Garvey, *Writing with Scissors: American Scrapbooks from the Civil War to the Harlem Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 235-37.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 238.

<sup>20</sup> Unknown title, unknown publication, [1919], found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'I', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/7, fol. 8.



though nineteen of them were retaken in various parts of Germany, ten got right away into England, a record for any camp in Germany during the war.<sup>21</sup>

Harvey barely changed the prose, altering a few words here and there, and adding Niemeyer's catch-phrase 'I guess you know' to his quotation (Niemeyer's overuse of the phrase was also noted earlier in the same article, as it is in most prison-camp memoirs set in Holzminden). The change from 'two days' to 'a couple of days' may reflect Harvey's memory of events, or perhaps Harvey made the change to give the statement a more American tone, as Niemeyer had learned English in the United States, and Harvey claimed he 'talked broken American under the impression that it was English'.<sup>22</sup> This article is pasted in Harvey's scrapbook with the title missing and no date or other information, so it cannot be proven whether it or *Comrades in Captivity* was written first. As all of the articles in the surrounding pages are from 1919 or earlier, it is likely that Harvey was the one doing the copying.

Another article in Harvey's scrapbook was written by 'A Returned Prisoner of War' who was at many of the same camps as Harvey. The article describes the reaction from British officers when a guard using a hound found a cache of contraband items:

[The British prisoners] opened 'books' and sweepstakes upon how many hiding-places the dog would find and how quickly he would discover them. Everybody spurred the dog on with cries of 'Seek! Seek!' and 'Good dog!' When the animal discovered a second store there was a positive shriek of joy.<sup>23</sup>

Harvey's description of the same (or a similar) event is, again, clearly inspired by the article:

[The British prisoners] immediately opened books and sweep-stakes as to

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<sup>21</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 240.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 225.

<sup>23</sup> 'We Puzzle the Hun', unknown publication, [1919], found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'I', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/7, fol. 11.

the number of such hiding-places the dog would discover, and in what space of time. Cries of 'Good Dog!' and 'Seek! Seek!' gave him encouragement, and when at last he did discover a second and last store, a perfect howl of applause went up from all present.<sup>24</sup>

The repeated words 'books' and 'sweep-stakes', and the same encouragements shouted at the dog, leave little room to doubt that this article was on Harvey's mind when he wrote his own story. Again, it is possible that the officer writing this article was actually inspired by Harvey, although it is very unlikely that newspapers would be publishing articles on returned POWs much past mid-1919. As Harvey would find, the public had little appetite for such stories by the time he published his memoirs in early 1920. It is also unlikely that Harvey was the unnamed author of the article: as a published author needing publicity, he would certainly want his name broadcast.

Harvey could be even more cavalier with information gained from his research. His description of Bad-Colberg *Offiziersgefangenenlager* was taken nearly verbatim from an article found in his scrapbook. Harvey's words read:

Bad-Colberg, in Saxe Meiningen, is, as its name implies, a sanatorium built over some thermal springs. The village is quite small, not more than about eighty houses, and it is five miles from the nearest railway station. It is situated in a valley set among low hills covered with considerable stretches of pine-woods.<sup>25</sup>

Comparison of this quotation with the opening lines in the article shown in figure V proves that all Harvey did was slightly modify the first sentence. He himself underlined the very sentences that he lifted from the article, which had appeared in the November 1918 issue of *The British Prisoner of War*, a publication of the Central Prisoner of War Committee of the Red Cross and Order of St John.<sup>26</sup> We can be certain that this article was not written by Harvey,

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<sup>24</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 162.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 246.

<sup>26</sup> 'Bad Colberg – Saxe Meiningen', *The British Prisoner of War*, November 1918, p. 131, FWWAMD.

and therefore that Harvey did plagiarize it. In his haste to finish the book, he was not as careful as he should have been in his use of research.

Despite this misuse of sources, most of the book was Harvey's original work, and is a valuable resource for understanding the lives of British and Commonwealth officer POWs. *Comrades in Captivity* is particularly illuminating when it comes to the social and intellectual lives of the officers. As Harvey's poetry had shown, it was the mundane day-to-day existence in captivity that was the most difficult and damaging aspect of prison camp life. He reiterated this fact several times in his memoirs, and demonstrated the creative lengths to which POWs would go in order to relieve this monotony. Most other POW memoirs focus on the author's escape, only adding some description of POW camp life to build tension prior to the escape narrative. Harvey's work describes the lectures, concerts, plays, celebrations, and additionally the defiance of authority that allowed officer POWs not only to endure, but also to resist their circumstances. Resistance was directed just as much at the depression that burdened POWs as it was towards the enemy.

The first essay to appear in the book is Harvey's attack on the philosophy of George Bernard Shaw, given as a response to a lecture by Hugh Walker in favour of Shaw. Harvey stated that the reason for printing the essay was that it

shows what some thousand prisoners of various nationalities were thinking, talking, and quarrelling about for a month in 1916. It is from a psychological standpoint that the matter is interesting, not from a literary. What happens inside prisoners is, I believe, just as important as what happens outside them.<sup>27</sup>

Harvey wanted the POW story to be known as more than just tales of suffering, deprivation, and the occasional act of daring escape. Despite their

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<sup>27</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, p. 58.

circumstances, he demonstrated that the officers continued to be scholars and gentlemen, never reduced by the primitive conditions surrounding them.

Harvey stated of his essay on Shaw that 'anyone can skip the chapter who cares to do so', although he slyly placed this statement after the essay.<sup>28</sup> He stated the same again before his lecture 'On the Comradeship of Men and Books', but added that he 'would rather that [such a person] would not buy the book'.<sup>29</sup> To Harvey, these essays were just as important as his narrative, and not because he was a literary man who wanted readers to appreciate his critical merits. He wanted to convince readers (and perhaps himself) that the years in confinement had not been wasted. Harvey knew that veterans might be viewed as damaged individuals owing to combat trauma, and that POWs might be seen as psychologically scarred from years of mental inactivity. His final lines in the essay speak to this:

But it is possible to regard this prison life as a retreat (an enforced one), wherein we may attain at leisure a perspective of life and literature which will send us home completer men than we were when we came.

And that is our duty to the country we serve.<sup>30</sup>

The statement comes across so self-consciously in *Comrades in Captivity* that it would be tempting to think that Harvey simply added it to the essay post-war and pre-publication, yet the manuscript essay in his prison-camp notebook attests otherwise.<sup>31</sup> Harvey's lectures revealed that some officer POWs were putting their time to good use, developing their minds so that they might be more useful citizens on their return. Not only was the POW enlightening himself in order to maintain sanity, he was also doing it as a duty to his country. Harvey

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 168.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 189.

<sup>31</sup> POW-camp lectures notebook, 1916-1917, GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 1.

hoped to impress on the reader that, although they were no longer fighting, POWs were still serving their country as best they could.

Harvey had begun to develop his 'New England' philosophy as a prisoner – a philosophy which required a certain enlightenment from the middle and upper classes after the war. Many veterans, not just Harvey, hoped that the war would see England reborn as a politically more representative and socially more egalitarian country. Harvey's essay allowed him to demonstrate that some POWs held this same hope. More importantly, by giving these essays as a POW, he was promoting ideas to an audience consisting of the officer class. He expected them to return home and use their positions in society to implement them. By late 1919 there was already a labour crisis. High unemployment among veterans caused protests and demonstrations, while mass strikes sometimes led to riots. Harvey had a greater ambition than simply to tell his POW story when he published the following excerpt from his essay 'On the Comradeship of Men and Books':

To more than one of us undoubtedly had come the suspicion before the war that England, held fast in the grip of her industrialism, was already upon the path of decadence. Experience of the British Tommy taught us to think differently.

[...] When those young employers of labour, who have done such magnificent work as officers, return to England after the war to take up the threads, or rather the reins, of their former occupation; when trouble arises and the temptation to call names – 'lazy scoundrels,' 'cads,' 'ignorant agitators,' etc. – let them remember the vast body of these 'ungrateful wretches' are the same men who went to make up the platoons they were so proud of and so rightly proud. The men on their part should remember how many of these 'hateful and greedy capitalists' were once loved and trusted captains. Further, let them seek explanation in the fact that these men were previously organised – content and enthusiastic – in the pursuit of an aim common to all, and let them ask themselves where that aim is, if anything has arisen to replace it, what common ideal *now* exists to be served – in short, if we are as fully organised for peace as we were for war, as enthusiastic for Life as we were for Death.

The solution of the labour difficulty will doubtless lie in a common ideal.<sup>32</sup>

Harvey had been actively campaigning for conciliation between the classes at the time he was writing *Comrades in Captivity*. When his papers were discovered, there were over sixty copies of a leaflet among them titled 'The Red Light'. This was a reprinting of an article by Harvey that was first published in *The Gloucester Citizen* on 4 October 1919. The existence of the leaflets indicates that someone had seen fit to distribute his message as widely as possible. It was an appeal to both sides of the recent labour confrontations to moderate their stance, lest the country find itself drawn into civil war. Harvey assured citizens that

whichever side won, it would be the wrong side. Civil war deals only in extremes, and to those extremes are necessarily dragged all moderate elements; there is no escape. I say definitely that the result of civil war in England, if it should occur, would be one of two things: either a victory for cosmopolitan usury through militarism, or a victory for cosmopolitan anarchy through Bolshevism.<sup>33</sup>

Harvey's use of the word 'cosmopolitan' in such an unusual and negative way is unexpected, considering the praise that he gave to the cosmopolitan nature of German POW camps before the prisoners were separated by nationalities. He may have meant 'cosmopolitan' to represent that which reflected only the interests of those from major industrial centres, who were therefore a threat to the rural life idolised by distributists. Harvey could have been using the word in the way the character Tom Broadbent in Bernard Shaw's *John Bull's Other Island* did:

You are thinking of the modern hybrids that now monopolize England. Hypocrites, humbugs, Germans, Jews, Yankees, foreigners, Park Laners,

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<sup>32</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 176-77.

<sup>33</sup> F.W. Harvey, Leaflet titled 'The Red Light', 4 October 1919', GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/91.

cosmopolitan riffraff. Don't call them English. They don't belong to the dear old island, but to their confounded new empire.<sup>34</sup>

Harvey was no Shavian, but he was also certainly well acquainted with Shaw's works. The character's statement is against the outside influences on the country that were not 'English' by his standards; Harvey feared that such outside influences – such as Russian Bolshevism – might destroy the 'green and pleasant land' that he and other distributists wished to see England become again. 'The Red Light' further states that a civil war would leave 'England lying an easy prey to any foreign nation or capitalist'.<sup>35</sup> This fear of outside influences – either beyond England, or inside English cities but outside of the English countryside – demonstrates that Harvey was already contemplating his retreat from the world to the seclusion of the Forest of Dean.

*Comrades in Captivity* was published on 11 December 1919 (according to Sidgwick & Jackson's records, despite the official publishing date of 1920 on the book), and was perhaps Harvey's most critically successful work.<sup>36</sup> The *TLS* gave it a favourable review, particularly noting that 'the intellectual pursuits of the officers are not overlooked, and two lectures are given in full – nor are the pages devoted to them wasted', while the *Scotsman* also wrote appreciatively of the lectures.<sup>37</sup> Harvey would have been pleased that his efforts to highlight officers' self-improvement in the camps had paid off. The *Morning Post* rated it as among the best of POW memoirs, stating that it was worthy enough 'to go through as many editions as Mr. Harvey's "Gloucestershire Lad"'.<sup>38</sup> The *Army*

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<sup>34</sup> George Bernard Shaw, *John Bull's Other Island; and Major Barbara; Also, How He Lied to Her Husband*. (London: Archibald Constable & Co. Ltd., 1907), p. 17.

<sup>35</sup> Harvey, 'The Red Light', GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/91.

<sup>36</sup> Sidgwick & Jackson's volume labelled 'Records', 1910-1946, Bod., S&J, MS. 322.

<sup>37</sup> 'Comrades in Captivity' in 'List of New Books and Reprints', *TLS*, 18 December 1919, p. 769, TLSHA; 'Comrades in Captivity', *The Scotsman*, 29 December 1919, found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'N', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/11, fol. 69.

<sup>38</sup> 'Lions in the Cage', *The Morning Post*, [1920], found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'N', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/11, fol. 69.

*and Navy Gazette* even implied that it was worthy as professional-development reading for officers, stating that it showed what was expected of British soldiers under adversity, and was 'emphatically a book to be read and one that will repay the reader'.<sup>39</sup> It received many more positive reviews, from national papers such as the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily News*, to local and regional papers such as the *Saturday Westminster* and the *Pall Mall Gazette*, as well as the many Gloucestershire and West Country papers that existed in the day.<sup>40</sup>

Harvey was probably the proudest of the review in *Land and Water*, a periodical edited by Belloc that ran from 1914-1920, dedicated especially to wartime news. Harvey's respect for Belloc's literary style and political opinions would give a review approved by him (or perhaps even written by Belloc himself) high standing. Harvey underlined some of the praise in his copy of the article, highlighting that the reviewer believed that *Comrades in Captivity* 'takes a high place [among POW memoirs], perhaps even [...] the highest'.<sup>41</sup> The final line of the review – also underlined by Harvey – reassured him that the book had achieved the goals that he had set for it: 'I recommend the book not only as a collection of information, but also as a lively and well-written piece of literature'.<sup>42</sup> Harvey triple-underlined 'literature', as it was an affirmation of his value as a writer of prose. This praise of *Comrades in Captivity* holds true today, as a modern reader will still find that Harvey's book is the most approachable of all First World War POW memoirs, and the attention to detail – certainly enhanced by his post-war research in newspaper articles (and some plagiarism) – provides a solid resource for understanding the day-to-day life of

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<sup>39</sup> 'Comrades in Captivity', *Army and Navy Gazette*, 8 January 1920, found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'N', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/11, fol. 76.

<sup>40</sup> F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'N', [1914-1956], GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/11, passim.

<sup>41</sup> 'Prisoners', *Land and Water*, 8 January 1920, found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'N', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/11, fol. 77.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*



British officer POWs. It is especially useful in illustrating some of the light-hearted aspects of POW life that memoirs published during the war tend to overlook – possibly because publishers did not believe that the wartime public wanted to read much about life under German militarism that was positive.

In an article in *The Chapbook* of January 1921, the Poet Laureate, Robert Bridges, cited *Comrades in Captivity* for demonstrating truths to him that were withheld from most during the war: that brutality in prison camps was the exception rather than the rule; that brutality, when it occurred, was not known to the general German public; and that treatment of prisoners was entirely dependent on the camp commandant's whims rather than official policy. These misapprehensions had provoked him to write a poem in October 1918 titled 'Our Prisoners of War in Germany' which claimed that 'not one [German citizen had] spirit enough to cry Shame' at the supposed widespread brutality.<sup>43</sup> Bridges offered an apology to the German people, stating that many post-war stories by POWs had set this record straight. He felt that he 'need cite only one, the book titled *Comrades in Captivity*'.<sup>44</sup> As a record of the truth of what happened in the camps, Harvey's memoir was succeeding.

While Bridges recognised the book's value as a record, a future Poet Laureate, John Masefield, praised its literary value: '[*Comrades in Captivity*] has been a great delight to me. I have enjoyed it more than any book about the war that has come into my hands. It is a most strong and exciting tale most admirably told'.<sup>45</sup> The prose in *Comrades in Captivity* is particularly clear and concise; Harvey would regress to a more Edwardian prose when writing his

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<sup>43</sup> Robert Bridges, 'A Note by Mr. Robert Bridges', *The Chapbook (A Monthly Miscellany)*, January 1921, p. 22-24; Robert Bridges, *October and Other Poems* (London: William Heinemann, 1920), p. 39.

<sup>44</sup> Bridges, 'A Note', p. 23.

<sup>45</sup> Boden, p. 245. See footnote 15 in the 'Introduction' chapter of this dissertation.

novel. His memoirs were the kind of direct, realistic literature that readers wanted following the war, but although this gained critical praise, neither readability nor good reviews would result in successful sales. Sidgwick & Jackson's account books show that they were still struggling to sell out the first edition by 1927.<sup>46</sup> No records state how large the first print run had been, but from 1925 to 1932 the publishers only managed to sell 130 copies, and according to Harvey the book was eventually remaindered.<sup>47</sup>

Harvey tried to keep the spirit of his wartime work alive following his return. He had been entirely unable to enjoy the modest fame that *A Gloucestershire Lad* had brought him at home, but he had returned in time to benefit from the success of his second collection. Although *Gloucestershire Friends* never reached the same level of success as *A Gloucestershire Lad*, it was still well received and went into three editions. *The Spectator* would note that it 'confirms [Harvey's] claim to a high position among our soldier-poets', while the *TLS* stated that he 'writes with grace and skill and, frequently, much force and depth of feeling'.<sup>48</sup> The *TLS* added that Harvey was at his best 'when the war and his own captivity are before him', foretelling the fact that Harvey's war poetry would remain his best claim on posterity.<sup>49</sup> Other artists were attracted to his wartime work, and collaborated with him to their mutual benefit. A series of concerts titled 'From a German Prison Camp' was held featuring poems from both of his collections, interpreted by Elisabeth Ann (stage name of 'Mrs Harry Bedford') with piano improvisations by Kathleen Markwell.<sup>50</sup> At least

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<sup>46</sup> Sidgwick & Jackson's Account Book, 1908-1933, Bod., S&J, MS. 319.

<sup>47</sup> Sidgwick & Jackson to F.W. Harvey, 12 October 1932, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/135; 'Postcard from F.W. Harvey to Hugh Walker, 4 March 1945, GA, FWH, D12912/1/3/35.

<sup>48</sup> 'Recent War Verse', *The Spectator*, 5 January 1918, pp. 22-24 (p. 23), SA; René Francis, 'Two Poets', *TLS*, 4 October 1917, p. 474, TLSHA.

<sup>49</sup> Francis, p. 474.

<sup>50</sup> "'From a German Prison Camp" – Present-Day Poems', *The Morning Post*, 4 April 1919, found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'N', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/11, fol. 55.

two of these concerts were held. The first took place on 26 March 1919 in Cirencester, while the second was held on 3 April at Steinway Hall in London.<sup>51</sup> It is not known if Harvey attended these events, although he did contribute a programme introduction for the second performance.<sup>52</sup> A review of the London concert was published in the *Morning Post* that was favourable towards the performers, but particularly so towards Harvey, stating that his poems showed ‘a freshness of theme and an individuality of expression that are alluring. In turn they are quaint, pathetic, and sportive, but in all there is a human note, just as there is a phraseology and an imagery that qualify Lieutenant Harvey as a poet of the day’.<sup>53</sup>

Harvey and his work would feature in two more concerts immediately after the war, both of which would also highlight the work of Ivor Gurney. The two men had often looked forward to their reunion, writing in anticipation of it in letters during the war. In a letter of 1918, Gurney looked forward to a day after the war when the two could work on collaborations of Harvey’s words set to Gurney’s music. He imagined this happening not in Gloucestershire, as one might expect, but in London, assuming that he would again take up a place at the RCM after the war, and that Harvey must pursue a poetry career in the city. Gurney began by remembering the days before the war, when he was at the RCM and Harvey was studying law at Lincoln’s Inn, before looking to the future:

O headachy London you are dear to all of us, and coming through the streets from Euston to Kings Cross was an adventure full of incident! What a breath of freshness your return will be! Just think of Chelsea of evenings, and long sunsets from Putney Bridge! It’ll come and you’ll be poet of all these lovely things, and I’ll have a shot at setting them! We’ll walk from Westminster to London Bridge together and look at everything

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<sup>51</sup> Event programme for ‘Poems from a German Prison Camp’, 26 March 1919, found in F.W. Harvey’s scrapbook ‘N’, GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/11, fol. 56; Event programme for ‘Lieut. F.W. Harvey’s Poems from a “German Prison Camp”’, 3 April 1919, found in F.W. Harvey’s scrapbook ‘N’, GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/11, fol. 55.

<sup>52</sup> Event Programme, 3 April 1919, GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/11, fol. 55.

<sup>53</sup> “From a German Prison Camp” – Present-Day Poems’, GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/11, fol. 55.

anew, tired forms on the seats, reflections on the water, tall buildings, faint stars, and all the rest of wonder London has for seekers of Beauty.<sup>54</sup>

At the heart of this is Gurney's desire to be with his friend, celebrating Beauty wherever it could be found through their arts. It was a genuine hope that the end of war would bring the end of troubles. Given our knowledge of Gurney's tragic post-war life, we might be tempted to look at his hope as naïve, but he and Harvey were destined, if only for a short time, to bring this dream to realisation.

The two men surely had a joyful reunion, but also a productive one, as 'overnight' on 25-26 February 1919 they began and completed their long awaited collaboration.<sup>55</sup> It was a song cycle that added settings of Harvey's poems 'Piper's Wood', 'The Horses', 'The Rest Farm', and 'Song of Minsterworth Perry' to the existing 'In Flanders'. The manuscript music for all but 'In Flanders' is now lost, and no copies seem to have been made. We do not know how these songs sounded, but the Harvey collection has also revealed how they were presented and performed. One of Harvey's notebooks is a script for a recital that featured the settings, along with recitations of twenty other wartime poems by Harvey.<sup>56</sup> The settings were sung by Harvey while Gurney provided piano accompaniment. The recital was held on the first day of March in Stroud; John Haines reported to Marion Scott that it was a complete success.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Ivor Gurney to F.W. Harvey, [1918], GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/30.

<sup>55</sup> Harvey, Frederick William (song settings of), GA, IG, D10500/1/M/2/46.

<sup>56</sup> F.W. Harvey and Ivor Gurney, F.W. Harvey and Ivor Gurney's collaborative recital script, [1919], GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 7. Poems recited were: 'F.W.H.', 'Gloucestershire – From Abroad', 'Land of Heart's Delight', 'Triolet (If beauty were a mortal thing)', 'English Flowers in a Foreign Garden', 'The Oldest Inhabitant Hears Far Off the Drums of Death', 'Seth Bemoans the Oldest Inhabitant', 'The Soldier Speaks', 'To His Maid', 'Ballade of Beelzebub – God of Flies', 'If We Return', 'The Dead', 'Epitaph', 'To R.E.K.', 'Gonnehem', 'Song of Health', 'Ballade of Damnable Things', 'Prisoners', 'Solitary Confinement', 'Praise of Ale', and 'Ducks'.

<sup>57</sup> Boden, pp. 241-242; 'Soldier Poets in Stroud', *Stroud Journal*, 8 March 1919, found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'N', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/11, fol. 53.

Although it delivered a celebration of their safe return and of their new collaborations, the recital also hinted at the survivor's guilt felt by both men, and foreshadows the poetry that they would continue writing to ensure that fallen comrades were not forgotten. Midway through the recital Harvey stated, 'Here are a few short poems about dead comrades: – War chiefly means dead comrades – a fact which we who return are not disposed to forget'.<sup>58</sup> The section of the performance that followed was a cycle which described an infantryman's experience at the front: 'If We Return', 'The Dead', 'Epitaph', and 'To R.E.K.' described life and death in the trenches, followed by 'Gonnehem' illustrating the experience of being removed from the front to a rear area. Finally, the section ended with 'The Rest Farm', with Harvey stating that:

Peace so utter needs music to express it – this Mr Gurney has supplied in his setting of [The Rest Farm]

[Harvey sings:]

Into this quite place  
 Of peace we come  
 The war god hides his face  
 His mouth is dumb.  
  
 All reckless wild dreams  
 His lips repeat  
 Are hushed by a little breeze  
 Of waiving wheat  
  
 And like the penance-peace  
 In a heart forlorn  
 Thrills the word of the trees  
 The sigh of the corn.

Close intimacy with Death promotes complete realisation of the value of all Life's little sweet things which do not depend upon the possession of riches but are the heritage of all men alive.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Harvey and Gurney, GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 7.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

Harvey and Gurney realised that they had never appreciated the value of peace until they had experienced war – much as Harvey’s earlier poem ‘Ballade No. 2’ had claimed that war had taught him the value of life by ‘Crying aloud the things Peace could not tell’.<sup>60</sup> Yet this knowledge came with a price paid in sorrow.

As Gurney had predicted, the two were able to enjoy their reunion and collaboration in London as well, performing together at a private concert hosted by Marion Scott on 19 March 1920. Scott had planned the concert to help place Harvey, Gurney, and Herbert Howells in front of influential Londoners who might further the three Gloucestershire men’s careers.<sup>61</sup> The concert was titled ‘A Gloucestershire Evening’, and again featured Gurney on piano with Harvey singing. They performed Gurney’s settings of Harvey’s ‘In Flanders’, Gurney’s ‘Severn Meadows’, and John Masefield’s ‘Captain Stratton’s Fancy’ – a song which Harvey had made popular amongst officer POWs in Germany even before it was published.<sup>62</sup> Gurney also performed his ‘Ludlow and Teme’ song cycle, while Harvey recited four of his own poems, and the concert ended with Howells performing his ‘Procession’.<sup>63</sup> The concert was very well received.<sup>64</sup>

These events were a high point in the men’s friendship after the war. Harvey and Gurney would soon be separated, as the poor sales of *Ducks* and *Comrades in Captivity* meant that Harvey had to return to the law for income; he took work with a firm in Swindon.<sup>65</sup> Still, not all in Harvey’s life in the early 1920s was discouraging. On 30 April 1921 Harvey and Anne Kane were finally married at the Holy Rood Catholic Church in Swindon after an engagement of nearly

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<sup>60</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, p. 30.

<sup>61</sup> Blevins, p. 184.

<sup>62</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 77-79; Programme for a ‘Gloucestershire Evening’, 19 March 1920, GA, IG, D10500/5/1/12.

<sup>63</sup> ‘Gloucestershire Evening’ Programme, GA, IG, D10500/5/1/12.

<sup>64</sup> Blevins, p. 185.

<sup>65</sup> Boden, p. 261.

seven years.<sup>66</sup> That same year, he published his fourth poetry collection with Sidgwick & Jackson, *Farewell*. The war was almost completely absent from the volume, aside from two mentions. In 'Gloucestershire Men' he notes in passing that some have 'Died for Gloucestershire in battle', although the poem is primarily praise of his fellow Gloucestershire citizens in general.<sup>67</sup> In 'Lucky', the speaker counts himself lucky

To have met and marched  
 With the finest men  
 (So I believe)  
 Earth ever bred  
 Since heaven was arched....  
*But they are dead.*<sup>68</sup>

The second verse moves away from war to lament lost love.<sup>69</sup> The absence of war-inspired material may be a clue that Harvey was trying to put the war behind him, or perhaps that the low sales of *Comrades in Captivity* had convinced him and his publishers that war writing no longer sold. Unfortunately, *Farewell* would see disappointing sales as well, never going past its first edition. Still, happiness came again into his life on 23 January 1922 when his daughter Eileen was born. By that December, Harvey had found work in Gloucester and had returned home, initially planning for his small family to live at The Redlands with his mother.<sup>70</sup> This should have been a joyful homecoming, but it was overshadowed by a task that awaited him.

In December 1922, Gurney was confined to the asylum for what would turn out to be the rest of his life. According to a letter from Marion Scott found in the Harvey papers, Harvey had been involved in the process of having Gurney committed. In the letter she thanks Harvey for writing to inform her about what

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 247-48, p. 261.

<sup>67</sup> F.W. Harvey, *Farewell* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd., 1921), p. 71.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Boden, p. 263.

was happening with Gurney, indicating that he had helped to arrange it: 'Taken all in all, the arraignment by which Ivor is to be sent to a Neurasthenia Home under the Ministry of Pensions seems as good a one as could have been come to in the circumstances'.<sup>71</sup> She adds: 'from what you tell me it is evident that he needs it'.<sup>72</sup> She then asks Harvey what plans are in place to get Gurney to Barnwood House asylum, stating that her worry is based on reports that Gurney had become violent when he was committed to Lord Derby's War Hospital in 1918.<sup>73</sup> This was no doubt a warning for Harvey to prepare himself for the pain of having to see Gurney in such state, and for having to be an agent in enforcing his incarceration.

Helping to arrange Gurney's confinement was doubtless one of the most difficult things that Harvey ever had to do, and the sting did not fade. Gurney would write to Harvey from the hospital for the rest of his life, sometimes accusing his friend over his incarceration, at other times begging Harvey to petition for his release, while at other times still his letters were nothing but incomprehensible ramblings. Sometimes, in letters that must have been extraordinarily uplifting to Harvey when they did come, he would write in appreciation of Harvey's friendship, and in remembrance of better days. Two envelopes that had once been used by Gurney to send letters were found among Harvey's papers, and are very telling. Harvey seems to have reused these envelopes for organising multiple letters from Gurney. On one envelope Harvey wrote 'Happy letters of I.B.G.', while a second set of letters was kept with an envelope stating 'I.B.G.'s Barnwood House Letters'.<sup>74</sup> The two

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<sup>71</sup> Marion Scott to F.W. Harvey, 16 September 1922, GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/86.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ivor Gurney to F.W. Harvey, [15 December 1919], GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/39; Two Letters from Ivor Gurney to F.W. Harvey, [1922], GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/65.



categories represent the happy and unhappy phases of Gurney's life and their friendship.

By 1925, Gurney had been transferred to the City of London Mental Hospital. On 20 October 1925 he received a visit from Helen Thomas, the widow of Edward Thomas, accompanied by Scott. Scott had arranged the meeting, knowing that Gurney greatly admired Edward Thomas's work, and hoping that the visit would benefit her friends. Helen and Gurney had an enthusiastic conversation, in which Gurney stated that he intended to set some of Thomas's work to music.<sup>75</sup> Moved by his offer, and probably also by his pitiable state, she asked Gurney, 'Is there anything I can do for you – anything that would give you pleasure?'<sup>76</sup> Gurney immediately replied 'Don't do it for me – do it for Harvey. Please get a publisher to publish his novel'.<sup>77</sup> This indicates that Harvey had not only started writing 'Will Harvey – A Romance', but apparently he had finished it.

The novel deals with themes of loss – loss of childhood and youth, loss of family and comrades in the war, and loss of the hope for social change after the war. Harvey was certainly grappling with these issues between the end of the war and 1925. An earlier letter of 15 August 1921 from Harvey to his ex-POW comrade, J.N.O. Rogers, mentions that he was writing a book – possibly his novel: 'It is probable that my letter emphasised over-much a political aspect which, considering the length of the book (already begun) enters only into a very small part. But I am interested in the opinions of a business man'.<sup>78</sup> Rogers worked in the industrial sector, and Harvey may have wanted his views on the industrialism that he demonised in the Eccleton episode early in the novel.

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<sup>75</sup> Marion Scott to F.W. Harvey, 20 October 1925, GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/89.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> F.W. Harvey to J.N.O. Rogers, 15 August 1921, GA, FWH, D12912/1/3/22.

The manuscript has an 'Author's Note' dated 1935, and an undated preface, both written by Harvey. Taken together, these also indicate that he began the book much earlier than his documented attempts to publish it in 1935. The preface is written in the voice of one for whom the war is still fresh in the memory: 'This is a war book. No one wants to read war books now-a-days; and I, who came through do not want to write one. Only I cannot rest for the dead'.<sup>79</sup> Harvey's acknowledgement reflected his experience of disappointing sales for *Comrades in Captivity*. His inability to 'rest for the dead' suggests a man for whom the memories of death are still recent, haunting his waking and his sleeping hours. The preface continues: 'However we dislike it, the fact stands that for this generation the war must be the supreme historical event'.<sup>80</sup> To describe his intended audience as 'this generation' would be much more suitable in the early 1920s than it would by 1935. In 1920, it would be safe to assume that most readers had been affected by the war; by 1935 a younger generation, for which the war was only a childhood memory, would also be finding its place in adult society.

The 1935 'Author's Note' speaks of the war with a certain detachment: 'events (such as the Great War) have been used only as factual rivets in a story which is essentially a pondering upon life itself and not a representation of personalities or topics'.<sup>81</sup> However, the preface declares that the book 'is a war novel'.<sup>82</sup> By 1935 Harvey may have wished to distance himself from his association with the war, but at the time of writing the novel he was still attempting to continue his wartime success, as he had tried to do with *Comrades in Captivity* and *Ducks*. The simple fact that Harvey dated his

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<sup>79</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. ii, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p. i.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., pp. i-ii.

'Author's Note', but not his preface, implies that the preface was meant to be published soon after writing, while the 'Author's Note' was an addendum given during a second attempt to publish. Even his terminology indicates a large break between writing the two. In his preface, Harvey refers simply to 'the war', while in the 'Author's Note' it becomes 'the Great War' – again indicating a temporal distance.

Harvey's preface claims that 'until the sacrifice is understood and justified our hands are unclean'.<sup>83</sup> Harvey believed that his comrades had died in order to rid the world of social inequality and injustice. Very soon after the war, Harvey began to see that this goal was not to be. In his scrapbook G, which he began before the war and picked up again after, there are several articles about the failure of society to accommodate veterans. The first of these speaks of a ceremony in which a Cardiff man, Arthur Richings, was welcomed back to his job as a low-ranking policeman. The article initially presents this as England making good on its promise that veterans could return to their jobs. The writer then changes positions, informing readers that this man had volunteered in 1914, was mentioned in dispatches three times, was wounded six times, had earned a battlefield commission, the Croix de Guerre with Palms, and the MC, and had been made a Chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur, ending the war as an acting Lieutenant Colonel. But society was not ready to raise him to anything above the station he held before the war, so he was offered no position of authority in the police force.<sup>84</sup> Another article claimed that young middle- and upper-class men who had served as officers during the war were encouraging their fathers, the captains of industry, to improve conditions for the working men

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<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. ii.

<sup>84</sup> 'The Letters of an Englishman. A Policeman at Cardiff.', unknown publication, found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'G', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/5, fol. 81.

who had served in the ranks, as Harvey had encouraged in his prison-camp essays – yet those in power were dragging their feet.<sup>85</sup>

Failing to see his social revolution take place, Harvey began to despair at society. In 1924 he moved his family to Broadoak, where they lived in a house constructed from two railway carriages – a common expedient to create housing for the multitudes of returning veterans, although perhaps not what his landowning, middle-class family would have wanted for him. His house sat less than a hundred metres from the River Severn, and sometimes suffered from flooding.<sup>86</sup> He was now practising law among the poor of the Forest of Dean, an area that had become especially depressed after the war. This only added to his post-war disenchantment. Among the many cases he took, the defence of Albert Evans in late 1925 exemplifies the social inequality Harvey saw. The defendant was accused of aiding and abetting a criminal act, as his wife had been caught picking apples on land belonging to their landlord. Harvey stated in court that he ‘appeared as an ex-service man for an ex-service man crippled in the service of his country’, placing himself alongside his client to frame the case as an issue of veterans versus non-veterans.<sup>87</sup> Harvey asserted, and the court confirmed, that Mrs Evans had been given permission to collect fallen apples for the past 14 years. Harvey claimed that the charges were actually pressed out of spite, because Mr Evans refused to work for the low wages that the landlord had offered him, and because there had been some disagreements over rent. He added that Evans could not be an accessory as he was miles away when the apples were picked. The charges against Mr Evans were dismissed,

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<sup>85</sup> ‘Ex-Soldier and Peer. Breezy Meeting of Comrades of the War.’, unknown publication, found in F.W. Harvey’s scrapbook ‘G’, GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/5, fol. 84.

<sup>86</sup> Boden, p. 269.

<sup>87</sup> ‘Apple Theft Charge’, *Lydney Observer*, 2 October 1925.

although the judge did reprimand Mrs Evans for taking some apples from a tree, rather than only collecting fallen ones.<sup>88</sup>

According to Harvey's views, a landowner who was depriving the working classes of access to the traditional means of agricultural production was a direct opponent of distributism. As the newspaper articles collected by Harvey show, along with his appeals in 'The Red Light', he was seeing his dream of 'A New England' slip away in the few years immediately after the war. His novel would be his contribution to help stem this tide. His preface claimed that the understanding that the war's dead fought for societal rebirth 'will give to each a personal responsibility for the dead and their dreams, which will not rest till it has appointed representatives worthy to carry those dreams into effect and seen that work engaged upon in letters and in spirit'.<sup>89</sup> Harvey would use both letters and spirit in an appeal to establish that dream for which he had fought.

As the novel had reflected Harvey's hopes and dreams from his early life and through the war, so it also reflected his final disappointment. The concluding scene of the novel finds Will and Gypsy sitting on the well-known Gloucestershire landmark, May Hill, a month after their escape from Germany. Since their escape, Will's mother has died.<sup>90</sup> In reality, Harvey's mother did not die until 1947; however, she had nearly died in 1920, saved only by a surgical procedure.<sup>91</sup> In the novel, the death of Will's mother also represents the loss of youth for veterans, many of whom left for war as adolescents but returned from war to the world of adults, where they had to forge their own paths in life, no longer dependent on their families. Will and Gypsy are alone on the hill, overlooking the land for which they fought. They are arguing over Gypsy's

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. ii, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., pp. 285-86.

<sup>91</sup> Boden, pp. 312-13.

decision to leave Will. She attempts to convince him that they can never be together, despite their dreams: ‘Your world will not be the gypsies [sic] world, nor will the gypsies [sic] world be yours. Oh, I wish to God above it could be, my dear.’<sup>92</sup> Will is distraught: ‘have you no pity on me, for yourself, for either of us? The brother I loved is dead, the mother I worshipped; you only, my sweetheart, are left to me in a world of wreckage and horrible loneliness!’<sup>93</sup> This sentence is Harvey’s view of the plight of those veterans such as himself who had put so much hope into the outcome of the war: they returned only to the loss of friends and family, loss of youth, and the loss of that dream of ‘A New England’ which Gypsy represents throughout the novel. She leaves him only with the words ‘Parting isn’t forever’, which ring in his head in many voices as he realises ‘it was Gypsy, Eric, his mother, or all three that were speaking’.<sup>94</sup> The novel ends bleakly, with Will sobbing alone on May Hill. The loss of Harvey’s ‘New England’ was the loss of the hopes of his comrades and of his youth, but nothing could stop that dream from slipping away following the war, leaving him emotionally crushed.

The style of the novel is markedly different from that of *Comrades in Captivity*: it is a pre-war, Edwardian prose, characterised by verbosity and by frequent and often patronising interjections to address the reader directly. The following example is part of a description of Will Harvey’s mother:

She was good as the green earth is good, rather than as the yellow district visitor whose mouth is shaped to utter prunes and prisms – albeit biblical prunes, and prisms most holy.

And now gentle reader – if any – I will tell you (since it will take no more than a few seconds) why you sicken at the word ‘good’, and so, incidentally, put me to an unnecessary trouble.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Harvey, ‘Will Harvey’, p. 287, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 287-88.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> Harvey, ‘Will Harvey’, p. 32, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

When writing *Comrades in Captivity*, Harvey was possibly influenced by the journalistic language in articles about prison-camp life that he had been reading – and surreptitiously quoting – in his research. The novel was attempting to channel his pre-war dreams and early-war enthusiasm, perhaps influencing him to revert to a writing style that he associated with those days.

His prose may also have been shaped by another author whom he was reading at the time: C.E. Montague. The theme of Harvey's novel places him among those veterans famously described by Montague as experiencing 'disenchantment', in his 1922 book of that title. Harvey's life and art could be seen as a case-study for the model described by Montague, and Harvey was certainly influenced by his work. He liberally quoted from Montague's *Disenchantment* in his 1925 essay, 'Poetry of the Great War', stating that the book 'deserves to be better known'.<sup>96</sup> Montague's prose was old-fashioned, and at times difficult; Andrew Frayn argues that the 'prolix, oblique nature of Montague's prose limited the wider impact of his work'.<sup>97</sup>

Montague traced the roots of disenchantment to the idealistic volunteers of 1914, claiming that these men (himself included) would suffer the most from it as 'the higher the wall or horse from which you have tumbled, the larger [...] are your bruises and consequent crosses likely to be'.<sup>98</sup> He added that 'the record in length of vertical fall, and of proportionate severity of incidence upon an inelastic earth, is probably held by ex-soldiers and, among these, by the volunteers of the first year of the war'.<sup>99</sup> The volunteer of 1914, he claimed, had entered into the profession of arms with great enthusiasm, enjoying the physical

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<sup>96</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Poetry of the Great War', 1925, GA, FWH, D12912/3/3/38.

<sup>97</sup> Andrew John Frayn, 'Writing Disenchantment: The Development of First World War Prose, 1918-1930' (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Manchester, 2008), p. 38.

<sup>98</sup> C.E. Montague, *Disenchantment* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1922), p. 2.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

exertions and outdoor lifestyle, and feeling the release of the many troubles of civilian life:

All his maturity's worries and burdens seemed, by some magical change, to have dropped from him; no difficult choices had to be made any longer; hardly a moral chart to be coned; no one had any finances to mind; nobody else's fate was put into his hands, not even his own.<sup>100</sup>

Hardly a better description of Harvey's initial service period could have been written. Both men believed that their early-war comrades had enlisted to fight the same injustices; Harvey quoted *Disenchantment* in his war-poetry essay to illustrate this:

France to be saved, Belgium to be righted, freedom and civilization re-won, a sour, soiled, crooked old world to be rid of bullies and crooks and reclaimed for straightness, decency, good-nature, the ways of common men dealing with common men.<sup>101</sup>

Montague, like Harvey, saw the failures of society after the war as the final disappointment that crushed veterans' spirits and confirmed their disenchantment:

Now, after the war, he [the veteran] is shaken. Every disease which victory was to cure he sees raging worse than before: more poverty, less liberty, more likelihood of other wars, more spite between master and man, less national comradeship. And then the crucial test case, the solemn vow of the statesman, all with their hands on their sleek bosoms, that if only the common man would save them just that once they would turn to and think of nothing else, do nothing else, but build him a house, assure him of work, settle him on land, make all England a paradise for him – a 'land fit for heroes to live in.' And then the sequel: the cold fit, the feint at house-building and its abandonment; all the bankruptcy of promise; the ultimate bilking, done by the way of reluctant surrender to 'anti-waste' stunts got up by the same cheap-jacks of the Press who in the first year of the war would have had the statesman promise yet more wildly than they did.<sup>102</sup>

Distributist thought is hinted at here, with suggestions that veterans should have received land after the war – land ownership being a key tenet of distributism.

Harvey wrote his second war-poetry essay in 1925, the same year that he

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>101</sup> Montague, p. 3; Harvey, 'Poetry of the Great War', 1925, GA, FWH, D12912/3/3/38.

<sup>102</sup> Montague, p. 201.



defended his client in the apple-theft case. To Harvey, such a case would be a perfect illustration of a veteran being ill-used by those with power over them, and of veterans receiving little gratitude from those they had fought to protect, strengthening the extent to which Montague's words would speak to him.

Montague echoes Harvey's call for a 'New England' with his own belief that his comrades were fighting for 'a new Europe not soured or soiled with the hates and greeds of the old'.<sup>103</sup> A common perception (or misperception) among many soldiers and observers during the war was that Australian and Canadian troops were generally more effective and successful than British troops in battle. Montague argued in distributist terms that this was true, because of the oppression of the British working class in the industrial age:

Our men could only draw on such funds of nerve and physique, knowledge and skill, as we had put into the bank for them. Not they, but their rulers and 'betters,' had lost their heads in the joy of making money fast out of steam, and so made half our nation slum-dwellers. It was not they who had moulded English rustic life to keep up the complacency of sentimental modern imitators of feudal barons. [...] [T]hey could only bring to this harsh examination such health and sanity as the pleasant vices of Victorian and Edwardian England had left them.

These words bring to mind Harvey's experiences with poverty in pre-war Chesterfield that had helped to drive him towards distributism. Montague's upbringing had been in the Catholic Church, and faith remained an important aspect of his life, increasing the likelihood that he had been influenced by distributism.

Harvey admired *Disenchantment* so much that he struck on the idea of using it as a theoretical framework with which to understand First World War poetry. His 1925 essay 'The Poetry of the Great War' is a well-developed piece of scholarship. It combined Montague's theories with Harvey's opinions and his

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<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 187.

own research into the war's poems and poets. Harvey was, in this respect, ahead of his time, mapping a journey from idealism to bitterness that would soon become the standard structure used in many studies and anthologies. Notes on the essay show that Harvey gave this lecture publicly, although his papers provide no indication of where or when.

Harvey's selection of poems has stood the test of time. Frederick Brereton's *An Anthology of War Poems* (1930) is credited as the first work that first began to resemble later perspectives on the World War I canon, incorporating poets with rising reputations such as Graves, Gurney, Owen, and Sassoon, alongside the more established Binyon, Brooke, and Kipling.<sup>104</sup> The division of poems into phases that trace the mood of the poets from youthful enthusiasm to disillusionment would not be widely recognised until much later, with anthologies such as Brian Gardner's *Up the Line to Death* (1964), which set out to present the war's poetry as 'a journey [...] with a beginning, a middle, and an end'.<sup>105</sup> It has been claimed that Gardner's anthology is where 'the [current] canon began to take shape'.<sup>106</sup> Yet Harvey had already come to similar conclusions by 1925. He opened the essay by informing his audience that it only included work by poets other than himself, and that its originality was found in his 'order and selection'.<sup>107</sup> That selection is shown in the following table, including the subtitles given to each section:

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<sup>104</sup> Hugh Haughton, 'Anthologizing War', in *The Oxford Handbook of British and Irish War Poetry*, ed. by Tim Kendall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 430.

<sup>105</sup> Brian Gardner, *Up the Line to Death*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London: Methuen, 1964), p. xxv.

<sup>106</sup> Santanu Das, 'Reframing First World War Poetry: An Introduction', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Poetry of the First World War*, ed. by Santanu Das (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 3-34 (p. 6).

<sup>107</sup> Harvey, 'Poetry of the Great War', 1925, GA, FWH, D12912/3/3/38.

| <b>Table II: Contents of Harvey's 'Poetry of the Great War' (1925)</b> |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| Poem Title   | Author             |
| <b>'Vision'</b>  |                    |
| 'Into Battle'  | Julian Grenfell    |
| 'If I Should Die'  | Rupert Brooke      |
| 'The Volunteer'  | Herbert Asquith    |
| 'All the Hills and Vales Along'  | Charles Sorley     |
| 'To Germany'   | Charles Sorley     |
| 'Two Sonnets' (Part I only)  | Charles Sorley     |
| 'Before Action'  | W.N. Hodgson       |
| 'To the Poet Before Battle'  | Ivor Gurney        |
| 'A Renaissance'  | Robert Graves      |
| <b>'Misgiving'</b>   |                    |
| 'Song of Pain and Beauty'  | Ivor Gurney        |
| 'It's a Queer Time'  | Robert Graves      |
| 'Porton Waters'  | Frances B. Young   |
| 'August 1914'  | John Masefield     |
| 'Goliath and David'  | Robert Graves      |
| 'The Cross of Wood'  | Cyril Winterbotham |
| <b>'Disillusion'</b>   |                    |
| 'They'   | Siegfried Sassoon  |
| 'Strange Meeting'  | Wilfred Owen       |
| 'Anthem for Doomed Youth'  | Wilfred Owen       |
| 'A Terre'  | Wilfred Owen       |
| 'The Parable of the Old Men and the Young'                             | Wilfred Owen       |
| 'The End'  | Wilfred Owen       |
| 'Dulce et Decorum Est'   | Wilfred Owen       |
| <b>'Conclusion' [non-combatant poets]</b>                              |                    |
| 'Men Who March Away'   | Thomas Hardy       |
| 'Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries'                                    | A.E. Housman       |
| 'The Children'   | Rudyard Kipling    |
| 'The Unreturning Spring'   | Laurence Binyon    |
| 'The Men Who Loved the Cause that Never Dies'                          | John Freeman       |
| 'Fulfilment'   | Robert Nichols     |

Three more poems were found with the essay amongst Harvey's papers, on loose pages of the same unusually-sized paper with the same purple typewriter font: 'Slender Themes' and 'Envoi' by Francis Brett Young, and Gurney's

'Strange Service'.<sup>108</sup> These are not mentioned in the text, and may have been kept to hand for illustrating further points following the formal delivery of the essay.

Harvey aimed to prove to his audience that each man's decision to fight was complex and individual. In narrating his selection, he showed admiration for the work of the later, disillusioned poets, but he also praised the fact that the optimistic poets of earlier in the war were willing to sacrifice all for what they believed was a noble cause: 'The outstanding feature in all this poetry is the contentment, nay the gladness and exaltation with which men, soon to die, and well expecting death, went to meet it.'<sup>109</sup> He cited Sorley's 'All the Hills and Vales Along' as the supreme example, but added that it is a 'cheap and easy explanation of such amazing scorn of death to attribute it to a conventional public-school education'.<sup>110</sup>

He developed his argument by reciting Sorley's 'To Germany', a poem which asserted that citizens of Germany and Britain were 'blind', and fighting a war that should have been avoided – but now that war had come, it must be seen through. This was followed by a passage from Sorley's letters, in which Sorley mused on his personal observations of Germany during a visit there in the months prior to the war: 'I regard the war as one between sisters [...] Each side has a virtue for which it is fighting, and each that virtue's complementary vice. I hope that whatever the result of the conflict, it will purge these two virtues of their vices'.<sup>111</sup> Harvey's choice of this quotation as an illustration is still pertinent: the editor of one of the newest major First World War poetry

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<sup>108</sup> Harvey, 'Poetry of the Great War', 1925, GA, FWH, D12912/3/3/38.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

anthologies, *Poetry of the First World War*, independently selected the same quotation for the same purpose.<sup>112</sup>

So far, Harvey had painted a picture of the war poets that was compatible with his own reasons for fighting: a shared belief that the war would result in the purging of societal ills. Sorley was followed by poems from Hodgson, Gurney, and Graves, which continued on the theme of young recruits going resolutely to fight. Gurney's 'Song of Pain and Beauty' was used to mark the transition to a phase in the war experience, and in war poetry, where soldiers began to feel misgiving for their cause.

Harvey seemed to have less enthusiasm for writing about the poetry in the 'Misgiving' section, adding little analysis between poems. He did, however, take the opportunity to highlight the mental strain of war, focusing on the monotony that soldiers endured outside of battle: 'In that intolerable leisure of trench or prison to which I have referred, England mainly, but not England alone, occupied our thoughts. Always with tenderness but sometimes with bitterness we brooded upon the fallen'.<sup>113</sup> Although this risks oversimplifying combat and POW psychology, Harvey selected complex examples to illustrate his point: Graves's 'Goliath and David', and the lesser-known 'Cross of Wood' by Cyril Winterbotham (the same Lieutenant Winterbotham who had been a noted contributor to the *5<sup>th</sup> Gloucester Gazette*). The two taken together tell of Harvey's conflicting emotions towards death in battle. 'Goliath and David' shows the young, idealistic David going to fight the Philistine, but David is killed in a reversal of the biblical tale, implying that right does not always beat might. It hints that all death in battle is futile if that death cannot guarantee a positive

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<sup>112</sup> Kendall, p. 186.

<sup>113</sup> Harvey, 'Poetry of the Great War', 1925, GA, FWH, D12912/3/3/38.

outcome, additionally implying that God plays no role in the outcome of war.

Winterbotham's poem claims the opposite, opening with 'God be with you and us who go our way / And leave you dead upon the ground you won', and ending with:

Rest you content; more honourable by far  
Than all the Orders is the Cross of Wood  
The symbol of self-sacrifice.<sup>114</sup>

Harvey was not just trying to demonstrate two different viewpoints, but by tying them with the thoughts of soldiers in the trenches he was claiming that the attitudes of each individual soldier toward death in battle could vary depending on circumstance. He continued after the war to search for meaning in his comrades' deaths, and no doubt still struggled with feelings that vacillated between the two poems.

Although Harvey included none of his own poetry in the lecture, he did note that 'Ducks' was what Lascelles Abercrombie called 'poetry of Refuge', and that it might rightly fall into this essay in either the 'Misgiving' or the 'Disillusion' sections.<sup>115</sup> Harvey had revealed in *Comrades in Captivity* that he had written the poem as a form of escape from prison camp; here he claims it as an escape from the wider war.<sup>116</sup> This is a small hint at the disillusionment that Harvey himself experienced in his late POW years.

The third section, 'Disillusion', is more fully developed than the previous section, probably thanks to Montague's influence. Harvey claimed that Sassoon 'ushered in' the final stage in war poetry, citing 'They' as 'typical' of his work.<sup>117</sup>

He continued:

Sassoon was the originator of this mood in war-verse. Wilfred Owen was certainly its crown. One might almost say its crown of thorns for it was

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 231-33.

<sup>117</sup> Harvey, 'Poetry of the Great War', 1925, GA, FWH, D12912/3/3/38.

both sombre and glorious – that art of his. [...] From the face of war  
[Owen's poetry] ripped the veil of romance, and revealed plain  
MURDER.<sup>118</sup>

Owen receives more space than any other poet in Harvey's essay. Not only are six of his poems included, but Harvey also quotes Owen's famous preface, and Sassoon's short biography of Owen.<sup>119</sup> Harvey was ahead of his time in placing Owen foremost among the war-poets – it would not be until Blunden's introduction to Brereton's *Anthology of War Poems* in 1930 that any selection of First World War poetry would make such claims for Owen's significance.<sup>120</sup>

Harvey praised the enthusiasm of the volunteers of 1914, and this essay clearly shows how much he admired their poetry and the hope that they placed in the war. Yet he also greatly admired Owen's disillusioned poetry for revealing that the war was nothing other than 'plain MURDER'. For Harvey, there was no need to justify this conflict or to reconcile the two; they came as part of a natural process. It was not in the beginning or the end of his lecture that he gave the key to understanding this, but in the middle, and in a manner that made his point easy to miss. Harvey recognised that many people believed that disenchantment was the product of youthful naïvety being dashed against the realities of prolonged, industrial combat. Countering this familiar myth, he quoted Gurney's 'To the Poet Before Battle' as proof that volunteers early in the war signed up to fight with full knowledge that the war would be a difficult, horrifying experience which they would need reserves of inner strength to see through. He went on to assert:

The fact, therefore, that war did not turn out to be a picnic of any sort, is consequently of less importance than certain people would like to make

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Edmund Blunden, 'The Soldier Poets of 1914-1918', in *An Anthology of War Poems*, ed. by Frederick Brereton (London: W. Collins Sons & Co. Ltd., 1930), pp. 13-24 (pp. 22-23); Das, p. 6.

out. It is no explanation of the latter bitterness and disillusionment of which we have hinted, and to which we shall come.

Indeed, the importance of a picnic to youth is (I think) very grossly overrated. [...] [W]hat youth most hungers for is a cause. For that he will gladly spend himself to the uttermost. But he will also despair to the uttermost to find that cause unworthy.<sup>121</sup>

Harvey argued that they did, in time, find the cause unworthy, noting that the effects of this disillusionment can be seen in poetry. His praise for those who would selflessly sacrifice themselves for a cause that turned out to be undeserving seems to be echoed in Gardner's foreword to *Up the Line to Death*: 'The poets of 1914-1918 found nobility of man in their war, even if they did not find nobility in war itself'.<sup>122</sup> Harvey – at least in his post-war years – would have agreed wholeheartedly.

The essay is far from objective, but it is representative of what many veterans felt about the war and its failures. Harvey was aware of how much of himself he was projecting on to his selection and his analysis. Manuscript evidence suggests anxiety that he was crossing a line from scholarship into self-justification. Harvey deleted a passage on Julian Grenfell, which described how Grenfell argued with his commander for permission to carry out the solo patrols which he found so exhilarating. According to Harvey, 'A piece of bursting shell has deprived us of a great leader, with the characteristics of the finest kings of men'.<sup>123</sup> The audience would have been familiar with Harvey's own reputation for derring-do between the trenches, and he probably realised that praising qualities in another soldier that were also famously attributed to himself would smack of self-aggrandisement. He also selected, but then deleted, a passage from Sorley's letters, that certainly related to his own self-perception:

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Gardner, p. xx.

<sup>123</sup> Harvey, 'Poetry of the Great War', 1925, GA, FWH, D12912/3/3/38.



I am now beginning to think that free-thinkers should give their minds to subjection; for we, who have given our actions and volitions into subjection, gain such marvellous rest thereby. Only of course it is the subjecting of their powers of will and deed to a wrong master, on the part of a great nation, that has led Europe to war. Perhaps afterwards I and my likes will again become indiscriminate rebels. For the present, we find high relief in making ourselves soldiers.<sup>124</sup>

As a man who was noted for independence of thought and action, but who found that his happiest days occurred while under army discipline, Harvey no doubt found common ground with Sorley here. He may have cut the quotation for seeming self-congratulatory. Both deleted statements betray to the reader that Harvey found – or was seeking – similarities between himself and other poets while writing the essay.

Harvey's 1917 essay on war poetry had shown that he was paying attention to the works of other war poets during the conflict, while this 1925 essay demonstrates that war poetry remained of special interest for him afterwards. He went to some lengths to stay abreast of the topic: not only did he keep informed of new publications of war poetry, such as Owen's *Poems* published in December 1920, but he was also reading any available biographies and collected letters of the war poets. To him, study of the war and its poets was a duty. In the years after the war, and for the rest of his life, the war would be an obsession for Harvey, and would continue to trouble him. As he said in the preface to the 1925 essay, 'To cease to be troubled over it is a temptation: but it is also a treachery.'<sup>125</sup> He added that it gave him 'very little pleasure' to prepare the essay.<sup>126</sup> The reading and researching of it would presumably have been no joy either. Yet he clearly pushed himself to read and research a great deal about war poetry, possibly fuelling the brooding nature he became more

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

inclined to show as the years went on. Harvey ended his essay with a promise to continue the fight for social justice that he believed his comrades had died for, quoting John Freeman's 'The Men Who Loved the Cause that Never Dies':

But come you [the fallen] down and stand you yet  
A little closer to our side  
Or in the darkness we forget  
The cause for which Earth's noblest died.

It is for you, my audience, and for me to remain mindful of that cause and to see that it is never betrayed.<sup>127</sup>

Much like his novel, one purpose of Harvey's essay was to rally those who would listen, and call them to action to see that the societal rebirth that he and others had hoped for would still be an effect of the war. By continuing this fight, Harvey ensured that his war would never end.

Harvey published his final poetry collection with Sidgwick & Jackson, *September and other Poems*, in 1925, the same year as his son Patrick was born.<sup>128</sup> It was a well-received work, considered for the prestigious Hawthornden Prize, and it gained the praise of Robert Bridges, who stated that its poem 'Ghosts' rivalled 'The Wife of Usher's Well'.<sup>129</sup> Unfortunately, *September*, like his past two collections, saw poor sales. The publishers' account book shows that by the end of June 1927 they had still not paid any royalties on it, indicating that the book did not sell enough to cover the advance.<sup>130</sup>

In 1926, a publisher in the Forest of Dean, Frank Harris, published a small, paperback collection of Harvey's poems, including many that had been written for local events.<sup>131</sup> The war was more present in this collection than in

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Boden, p. 275.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., pp. 284-85.

<sup>130</sup> Account Book, Bod., S&J, MSS 319.

<sup>131</sup> Harvey, *In Pillowell Woods and Other Poems*, p. ii.

either *Farewell* or *September*, in part because some of these poems were used for the dedication of local war memorials.

One of the collection's poems, 'Havoc', begins 'Out of the reach of man's black fratricide / Let us flee to the clefts of the hills, with beasts to abide!'<sup>132</sup>

Harvey's disenchantment continued to show through: beasts 'steal not for gain, nor amass they gold for their pride', while 'rocks of the hills [...] softer are / Than hearts which are shrivelled husks – empty of love!'<sup>133</sup> He had grown so disenchanted with the failures of post-war society that he wished only to retreat from the world. That next year, he made the final move of his life, purchasing the house now called Highview in Yorkley, deep in a remote corner of the Forest of Dean. He continued for the next ten years to practise out of his office in Lydney, before moving his firm into his own home. As Boden tells us, '[Harvey's] income was barely sufficient to live on. His royalties declined to a mere trickle. His increasing need to find in Forest inns the antidote to stress and disillusion cost more than he could afford in either money or health'.<sup>134</sup>

Alcoholism probably shortened his life, and is unfortunately an illness that those with childhood memories of Harvey clearly recall, alongside his famous generosity and willingness to talk about poetry with anyone who so desired. He had almost completely rejected the middle-class, public-school values that he had been raised in, by choosing to live in such a poor area, and by doing nothing to increase his own personal wealth. The same feelings of melancholy and purposelessness that had nearly driven him to suicide before the war had come to reassert themselves; today he would probably be diagnosed with some form of clinical depression.

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Boden, p. 300.

Yet, these dark and lean years would produce two poems which belong among the best he ever wrote, both dating from 1928: 'To Ivor Gurney' and 'To Old Comrades, a Forest Offering'. Perhaps his retreat from larger society into the Forest of Dean had given Harvey the perspective that he needed to come to terms with the war which continued to trouble him. In each of these poems, Harvey movingly dwells on bittersweet memories of former comrades, before saying farewell to those friends whom the war had taken from him. 'To Ivor Gurney' was Harvey's poetic response to Gurney's mental decline. It seems to have been first published in a local newspaper in 1928, and later given a larger audience through publication in his 1947 collection 'Gloucestershire'.<sup>135</sup> The cause of Gurney's mental illness is still debated, but Harvey did not hesitate to lay the blame on the war:

Now hawthorn hedges live again;  
 And all along the banks below  
 Pale primrose fires have lit the lane  
 Where oft we wandered long ago  
 And saw the blossom blow.

And talked and walked till stars pricked out,  
 And sang brave midnight snatches under  
 The moon, with never a dread nor doubt,  
 Nor warning of that devil's wonder  
 That tore our lives asunder.

And left behind a night-mare trail  
 Of horrors scattered through the brain,  
 Of shattered hopes and memories frail  
 That bloom like flowers in some old lane  
 And tear the heart in twain.

This hawthorn hedge will bank its snow  
 Spring after Spring, and never care  
 What songs and dreams of long ago  
 Within its shade were fashioned fair  
 Of happy air.

But you within the madhouse wall,  
 But you and I who went so free,

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<sup>135</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Original Verse – To Ivor Gurney.', unknown publication, 1928, found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'L', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/9, fol. 10; F.W. Harvey, *Gloucestershire – A Selection from the Poems of F.W. Harvey* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1947), pp. 30-31.

Never shall keep Spring's festival  
 Again, though burgeon every tree  
 With blossom joyously.

Not that I fear to keep the faith;  
 Not that my heart goes cravenly;  
 But that some voice within me saith  
 'The Spring is dead!' yea, dead, since he  
 Will come no more to me.

It needeth but a tear to quench  
 The primrose fires: to melt the snow  
 Of Spring-time hedges, and to drench  
 With black the blue clear heavens show...  
 And I have wept for you.<sup>136</sup>

Harvey's description of memories of the war 'bloom[ing] like flowers in some old lane' calls to mind Gloucestershire lanes in spring, and also artillery shells that can be imagined to 'bloom like flowers'. Deferred shell-shock was, after all, one of the first diagnoses Gurney was given.<sup>137</sup> In Harvey's mind it was because of those shells blooming in France and Belgium that the two could never enjoy the blossoming of spring in Gloucestershire together again. The final stanza describes the defeated spirit caused by Gurney's asylum confinement, stating that a single tear could damage the happy memories of their time together – memories now completely washed away by Harvey's weeping. In writing such a personal and deeply emotive poem, Harvey was saying goodbye to the memories of Gurney as he was, and providing a tribute the best way he knew how.

One by one, most of Harvey's closest friends had fallen to the side of the war's 'night-mare trail'. Harvey had lost his closest comrade in the trenches, Raymond Knight; his brother and childhood best friend Eric; and in Harvey's mind the war had also pushed Gurney in to the asylum. He understood the loss caused by war all too well, and throughout his life he participated in memorial

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<sup>136</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire – A Selection*, pp. 30-31.

<sup>137</sup> Boden, p. 239.

services to commemorate that loss. It is said that on Remembrance Day he would always recite his poem 'To Old Comrades, a Forest Offering' at a ceremony at the Yorkley cenotaph.<sup>138</sup> His scrapbooks confirm that he wrote the poem shortly after moving there in 1928; they contain an early typescript of the poem – with notes for how to recite it – along with its first publication in a local newspaper that same year.<sup>139</sup> The following is the final version:

Knowing that war was foul, yet all a-hunger  
 For that most dear companionship it gave,  
 I wished myself once more on lousy straw;  
 And in a trice was there; and ten years younger,  
 With singing soldiers scornful of the grave:  
 The tough mates, the rough mates that lay on lousy straw,  
 And since have laid them down in earth. I saw  
 Again their faces flicker in the light  
 Of candles fixed most dangerously in rings  
 Of bayonets stabbed in wooden beams, or stuck  
 Down into the floor's muck...

The woods are bright  
 With smouldering beech. Only a robin sings.  
 Alone today amid the misty woods,  
 Alone I walk gathering fallen leaves,  
 For it is autumn and the day of the dead.  
 I come to where in silence broods  
 A monument to them whose fame still rings  
 (Clear as a bugle blown) to a heart that grieves  
 And lay my leaves for crown upon each head.  
 Here my old Forest friends are your own flowers!  
 Beautiful in their death as you in yours;  
 Symbol of all you loved, and were, and are.  
 Beautiful now as when you lived among us!  
 And in their heart I place this spotted fungus  
 Symbol of war that slayeth all things fair.<sup>140</sup>

In the first stanza he demonstrated the feeling of companionship that helped to surmount personal discomforts such as 'lousy straw' for beds, or even the

<sup>138</sup> Ken Goodwin, reporter/director, 'War Poet's Manuscripts Found', *The West Country Tonight* (ITV, 2012) <<http://www.itv.com/news/west/update/2012-11-09/wwii-poetry-discovered/> [NB: the URL programmer incorrectly used 'wwii' rather than 'wwi']> [accessed 10 November 2012].

<sup>139</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Forest Offering' (poem manuscript), found in F.W. Harvey's scrapbook 'L', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/9, fol. 55; F.W. Harvey, 'To Old Comrades, a Forest Offering.', unknown publication, [1929], found amongst F.W. Harvey's loose scrapbook pages, GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/14, fol. 43.

<sup>140</sup> Harvey, 'To Old Comrades', GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/14, fol. 43.

imminent threat of death. The soldiers here have not seen combat yet, and are still 'scornful of the grave', although he knows that they will someday be buried 'down in earth'. Harvey uses faces illuminated by candles to highlight the radiance of youth. Still, he reminds us of the impending destruction of this feeling and of some of these men: the light in this scene is given by candles which are held in makeshift candleholders made from bayonets. Bayonets such as these would destroy these youths, just as this companionship was given by an army that would send them to their deaths. Harvey had idealised these days so much that he wished he could trade the safety and relative comfort of his old age for the uncertainty and danger of going into combat, to relive his time with his comrades.

The poem shows us the duelling emotions of a veteran who is haunted by his wartime experiences, yet still wants to return to them. In the end he exposes war as the slayer of good men, but the poem's opening acknowledges that it was war that brought those men together and thus into his life. Harvey believed this personal conflict was peculiar to the veteran, causing dissociation from the rest of the world. In 1919, 'Return' had depicted the veteran as feeling alone and distanced from society. Nine years later, this poem shows the same alienation, with Harvey accentuating his loneliness by comparing his own state to that of a solitary robin in the woods. Both the robin and the soldier-poet are singing their song, but with no other of their own kind to hear it. This is emphasised through the anaphoric repetition of the word 'alone'. Although the poppy had come to symbolise the fallen of the First World War, Harvey, instead, honours his comrades with fallen leaves, finding symbolism in the fact that in changing their colour the leaves have died a beautiful death. He does this in honour of 'all you loved, and were, and are'. The draft had read 'all you loved,

and all you were'.<sup>141</sup> 'And Are' had to be added, because for Harvey these men were still alive, haunting and blessing his memories.

Harvey's often wrote poems influenced by folk tales. 'To Old Comrades' takes imagery from 'Babes in the Woods' to reflect his disappointment in the outcome of the war. In the tale, two children are placed in the care of their uncle by their dying parents. Each child is to receive a significant inheritance on coming of age. If they do not reach maturity, the inheritance will go to their uncle instead. The uncle hires two ruffians to take the children into the woods to murder them, but one of the ruffians realises he cannot complete the deed, and ends up slaying his partner in order to save the children. The children's apparent saviour then informs them that he is going to seek food for them, yet never returns. The children die of starvation and exposure in each other's arms. It seems they will have no grave, until robins take pity on them and cover the children with fallen leaves.<sup>142</sup>

Harvey re-enacts the story, as his poem's speaker gathers fallen leaves with which to cover his comrades' memorial, while listening to a robin sing. The analogy between the poem and the story shows his continuing bitterness about the outcome of the war. His comrades were sent off by their parents' generation to fight for what was promised to be a good cause, yet Harvey believed that the soldiers were betrayed and abandoned like the children were. Harvey builds his own grave of leaves on the memorial for his comrades, but he adds a bitter note to the proceedings, by placing 'a spotted fungus' in the centre of the leaves, as the 'symbol of war that slayeth all things fair'. The spotted fungus is most likely the fly agaric (*amanita muscaria*), the poisonous white-spotted red toadstool

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Randolph Caldecott, *The Babes in the Woods* (London: Frederick Warne and Co. Ltd., 1879), passim.



that often features in children's' books. This particular mushroom has a sinister connection to war: since the 19<sup>th</sup> century it has been popularly (and incorrectly) believed to have been used to create the hallucinogens that Viking Berserkers would use to induce a mad frenzy before throwing themselves in a rage into enemy battle lines to do as much damage as possible before they were killed.<sup>143</sup> In Harvey's poem, the toadstool represents all that drives men mad with a desire to kill each other, even the promise of a good cause that would turn out to be nothing other than a hallucination.

1929 saw the advent of what is now termed 'the war books boom', marked by a flood of First World War novels with a decidedly disenchanted view of the war, such as Richard Aldington's *Death of a Hero* and Frederic Manning's *The Middle Parts of Fortune*.<sup>144</sup> These novels placed particular emphasis on the perceived moral corruption of war – not only describing the horror of the trenches, but also focusing on alcoholism, profanity, and sex in the context of the war. Novels such as Aldington's were subject to pre-publication censoring according to the era's standards of profanity, but still managed to shock audiences regardless of the proscriptions.<sup>145</sup> Harvey felt that these authors had gone too far, and that depictions of such depravity were a dishonour to the memories of his comrades. In March 1930 he wrote in a newspaper that

The most lonely man in the world today is the old soldier. Most of his friends were killed. The newer generation growing up knows not him or his. For this reason he must live very much in the past, and for this reason I, as an old soldier, read every war book that I can get hold of.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Andy Letcher, *Shroom: A Cultural History of the Magic Mushroom* (London: Faber, 2006), p. 143.

<sup>144</sup> Frayn, p. 11.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 155-58.

<sup>146</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Robbing the Soldier of His Treasured Memories', unknown publication, found in F.W. Harvey's post-war notebook 1, GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/4/Notebook 1, fol. 72.

The picture of soldiers painted by current novelists was distorted and excessively negative:

To judge by modern war books, these friends were unfortunate slaves who lived like pigs, and died like dogs. In short, almost every war book now published is written, not from the volunteers [sic] but from the conscripts [sic] view point. This is so [even] when the volunteer writes the tale.<sup>147</sup>

He called this 'pacifist propaganda', and although he would normally support any propaganda that promoted peace, he felt that this should not commit 'treachery towards men [without] whose sacrifice, even this propaganda would have [been] impossible'.<sup>148</sup> Artistic liberties were necessary, but modern writers were failing:

I realise that [a one-dimensional depiction of soldiers] is the easiest way. It is the artist's trick to keep unity. It has the merit (a very doubtful merit) of being partly true. It is almost impossible for an artist to tell 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth,' but the writers of fashionable realism are failing even more disastrously than the old writers of romance.<sup>149</sup>

This may have been a hint at how his own war novel was turned into a personal reaction to the war-books boom. It was subtitled 'a War Romance' to show that he rejected the message of modernist novels, and wished to counter them with his romantic version of the truth. In the novel, he claimed that 'Romance became a butt of the intellectuals, who thought it dead', but he sought to establish a 'new Romance'.<sup>150</sup> The war books boom may have been the catalyst that pushed Harvey to finish his war novel, or, if he had already finished it, to edit it and again submit it for publication. He probably recognised the opportunity presented by a publishing climate that was receptive to war novels.

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid. The insertion of 'even' was Harvey's correction to the newspaper's accidental omission, as written on his copy.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', pp. 121-122, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

The novel was not subtle in its aims, and its descriptions of the war's early years certainly align with his comments in the newspaper article:

This must be set down to assure readers of something which is nowadays in danger of being forgotten in a very admirable hatred of war and whose forgetting must cause misunderstanding of certain men with whom the story is concerned. (That is an artist's only excuse for digression.)

Truth will permit no question of these men going sorrowfully to war, driven like sheep to the slaughter. That is a false modern idea.

[...] [The war's early volunteers] were joyful in one another's company. Circumstances could not vanquish that joy. It illuminated billets here, and barns in Flanders. It did not fail in the filthiest trench, with grunted oaths for common speech – oaths which have been seized upon by smart journalists to prove (in prose or poetry) the obsession of things which were never in their hearts – hate and despair. One can show war as the horror it is, without telling lies about soldiers. Soldiers were far the least comfortable, but far the most happy of England's population during the war.<sup>151</sup>

The success of war books in 1929-1930 led publishers to begin searching their archives and asking authors for use of formerly rejected manuscripts of war novels.<sup>152</sup> Still, there is no evidence that Harvey looked again for a publisher until 1935. He may have spent some time from 1930 to 1935 re-writing the novel, perhaps to reflect his opposition to the ideas being promoted by new war literature. By 1935 he had contacted a former wartime comrade, N.F. Nicholas, who agreed to act as his literary agent.<sup>153</sup> Harvey had never worked with an agent before (aside from Bishop Frodsham's *de facto* agency when publishing *Gloucestershire Friends*); that he began to do so now indicates a slight desperation, or perhaps an unwillingness to continue dealing with publishers personally after years of rejection. It was Nicholas who had the typescript prepared that survives today.<sup>154</sup> Harvey also asked Nicholas to attempt to find a publisher for his play 'What Happened', which he had written in

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<sup>151</sup> Harvey, 'Robbing the Soldier', GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/4/Notebook 1, fol. 72

<sup>152</sup> Frayn, pp. 152-53.

<sup>153</sup> N.F. Nicholas to F.W. Harvey, [February-September 1935], GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/140.

<sup>154</sup> N.F. Nicholas to F.W. Harvey, 13 September 1935, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/141.

1914, and another early play titled 'Soppy Saunders', along with several poems.<sup>155</sup> He was using Nicholas's services in a final effort to sell failed publications.

By 1937, Harvey's fortunes were in decline. On 19 July, Nicholas returned the novel and play manuscripts, stating that he could find no willing publishers.<sup>156</sup> A letter from Hugh Walker, dated a few days earlier, reveals that Harvey had become gravely ill.<sup>157</sup> This marked the beginning of both his physical and financial decline. Walker and other old comrades, along with family members, would continue to send him money for the rest of his life, although Harvey did attempt to pay debts back when he could.<sup>158</sup> The year hit its low point just as it was ending, when Harvey was informed of Gurney's death in a letter from Marion Scott dated the same day, 26 December 1937. The letter is in Harvey's archive, but only half of its single page remains. Perhaps it was torn in half in an act of despair by Harvey on reading it – the tear seems to follow the natural fold in the paper from right to left, before jutting upwards on the left-hand side – or perhaps it came apart from constant openings and re-folding. All that is left is the date, the salutation, and the first few lines: 'You would hear the sad news of Ivor soon anyway, but I would rather tell you. For a long while Ivor had been getting more and more ill. A month ago the Dr's [letter torn here]'.<sup>159</sup>

The relationship between Harvey and Gurney had been creative and brotherly. It is likely that the character Eric Harvey in Harvey's novel is to some degree a compound of Eric and Gurney. As Harvey claimed to include no

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<sup>155</sup> Nicholas to Harvey, [Feb.-Sep. 1935], GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/140; F.W. Harvey, 'What Happened' (author's manuscript), [1914], GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/2; F.W. Harvey, 'Soppy Saunders – A Comedy in Three Acts' (author's manuscript), [1920-1935], GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/3.

<sup>156</sup> N.F. Nicholas to F.W. Harvey, 19 July 1937, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/149.

<sup>157</sup> Hugh Walker to F.W. Harvey, 15 July 1937, GA, FWH, D12912/1/3/30.

<sup>158</sup> Hugh Walker to F.W. Harvey, 24 April 1944, GA, FWH, D12912/1/3/32.

<sup>159</sup> Marion Scott to F.W. Harvey, 26 December 1937, GA, FWH, D12912/1/2/90.

characters based on still-living people (aside from himself and his mother), a Gurney character could not be a central figure in the novel. Gurney is mentioned twice but only briefly: first as 'an art student' who is used merely as an example of the various types who volunteered for service early in the war; second when Harvey claims that England was being lifted to musical supremacy in Europe by the likes of 'Elgar, Stanford, Hubert Parry, Vaughan Williams, Bantock, Holst, Goossens, Howells, Bliss, and Ivor Gurney'.<sup>160</sup> Harvey and Gurney spent a great deal of time before the war walking in the countryside discussing the arts, and letters indicate that Harvey and his brother Eric did the same; it is very likely that all three together did so as well. In the novel, Eric is Harvey's only companion in wandering the countryside when Harvey realises his calling to be a poet.<sup>161</sup> It would have been fitting for Harvey to add elements of Gurney to the character of his brother in the scenes where the Gloucestershire countryside finally reveals to Harvey his calling to be a poet. It was, after all, a brotherly camaraderie that he shared with both men. In an early scene, Harvey used his 'Ballad of River Sailing', a poem written about his adventures sailing the *Dorothy* with Gurney on the Severn, as an illustration for a journey on the river taken with Eric. Use of that particular poem in this scene in the novel is clearly using Eric as a device to add memories of Gurney.<sup>162</sup>

Harvey often relived his wartime experiences and looked back on them as the height of his ability and happiness, yet he still detested war's destruction. He had hoped that the end of his war would result in a worldwide societal

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<sup>160</sup> Harvey, 'Will Harvey', p. 135, p. 184, GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 114-20.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90.

revolution that would make war obsolete. Yet, as he mourned the loss of his best friend to that war, he looked up to see another war looming.

## Epilogue: Renaissance

September 1939 – February 1957

‘Is F.W. Harvey still alive? He is not in the *Who’s Who* nor in the *Author’s Who’s Who*. Why has he disappeared? He was a good poet and it will be pleasant to hear that he is still living.’<sup>1</sup> These were the words of John Betjeman – future Poet Laureate – in the 23 March 1956 issue of *The Spectator*. Writing on the Gloucestershire poet Laurie Lee, Betjeman noted that the most recent poets to come out of the county before him were ‘Ivor Gurney and F.W. Harvey who wrote “Ducks”’.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, it would be too late for Harvey to contemplate any revival. By 1956 his health had declined considerably, with no hope for recovery. From the late 1930s onward, Harvey’s life and works – and indeed his health – would see a gradual decline, but these years were not without their significance. As always, echoes of the First World War would continue to play a significant role.

Aside from occasional radio broadcasts every year, Harvey had begun to recede from society and the literary world, but the start of the Second World War helped to draw him back out. On 27 May 1940, he volunteered to serve his nation again, this time as a member of the Local Defence Volunteers, later known as the Home Guard.<sup>3</sup> Townsend’s biography claims that ‘After the outbreak of the Second World War, Harvey withdrew more and more into himself; he did not want to talk about war, for the subject was too painful to him’.<sup>4</sup> On the contrary, Harvey’s experience during the war would in many ways

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<sup>1</sup> John Betjeman, ‘City and Suburban’, *The Spectator*, 23 March 1956, p. 371, SA. Harvey was, in fact, in the *Radio Who’s Who*, and kept a copy of his entry in it among his papers. His papers show that from 1928 onward he participated in at least twenty-five BBC broadcasts, most of which he wrote. (See GA, FWH, D12912/9/1/1)

<sup>2</sup> Betjeman, p. 371.

<sup>3</sup> Home Guard Service Certificate for F.W. Harvey, [1945], GA, FWH, D12912/7/4.

<sup>4</sup> Townsend, p. 79. Boden makes no such assertions, but lacking primary source material, he dedicates only a few sentences to the war.

be an intentional re-enactment of his life in the First World War, an attempt at a personal renaissance. He would see no combat this time, but he did throw himself into active participation in the Home Guard, began writing poems in support of the war and publishing them in local papers, and even found himself acting again as 'prisoner's friend' for fellow guardsmen brought up on punishment charges. Harvey served on the HQ staff for A Company, 4<sup>th</sup> Gloucestershire (Forest) Battalion, at the rank of private.<sup>5</sup> His status as a former commissioned officer, and as an educated professional, and most importantly his decoration for bravery, should have at least led to his placement as an NCO. It is probable that he was offered such an opportunity but turned it down, or made it clear from the beginning that he was not interested. Harvey's decision to serve as a private may have been an attempt to relive his more carefree experience in the ranks of the Gloucesters. Those were, after all, the happiest days of his life.

True to form, Harvey responded to the Second World War with words as well as military service. On Remembrance Day that year he followed his usual practice of writing a poem in commemoration of his fallen comrades. This time he also lamented the death of the hope that war would not scar future generations as it had scarred his. In 'Remembrance Day, 1940', he reminded his fellow citizens to remember his First World War comrades: 'The dead who fought / That wars should cease'.<sup>6</sup> He claims that his comrades 'were ne'er defeated / But cheated / Of Liberty', still bitter that the war did not result in a revitalised and reborn British society.<sup>7</sup> He saw this second war as a continuation

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<sup>5</sup> 'L.D.V. – Home Guard', *The Lydney Observer*, [May 1943], found in F.W. Harvey's loose scrapbook pages, GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/14, fol. 47.

<sup>6</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Remembrance Day, 1940', Unknown Publication, [November 1940], found in F.W. Harvey's loose scrapbook pages, GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/14, fol. 45.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*



of the first, and a failure to secure peace which required a new generation to finish the work of the previous generation:

So may each soldier son  
Re-win what they had won.  
But see that these  
Their winnings keep,  
So may at last their soldier fathers sleep  
In peace.<sup>8</sup>

He hoped that this war might finally result in the realisation of the dreams of his youth, a righting of society's wrongs that might see an end to inequality and war.

Another of his poems, apparently from later in the Second World War, was titled 'Here beginneth the Second Lesson'. It was based on reports that German POW camp guards had at first mistreated Allied POWs, but began to ease off as the war turned against the Third Reich. He answers:

I know. I was there before.  
His father gave me 'boot.'  
But when his mates could fight no more,  
Complained: 'War is not goot!'<sup>9</sup>

He added that 'They have treated "Lesson One" with scorn' but would soon 'wish they were never born'.<sup>10</sup> Through capitalisation of 'Lesson One' and 'Lesson Two', Harvey suggested an alternative name for the wars, one that combined the two as phases of a whole. By tying the POW experience of the First and the Second World Wars together, and demonstrating repeated patterns between them, Harvey attempted to justify his own place as a wizened, experienced mentor.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Here Beginneth the Second Lesson', unknown publication, [1940-1945], found amongst F.W. Harvey's loose scrapbook pages, GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/14, fol. 43.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

The proudest association Harvey ever enjoyed was with the Gloucestershire Regiment, and he was no doubt pleased when Home Guard battalions became affiliated with their local regiments. Harvey created a pamphlet which explained the traditions and history of the Gloucesters to members of the relevant Home Guard battalions, in order to strengthen this bond. The pamphlet claimed to be

A brochure compiled from official records and from letters and diaries of dead and living soldiers who have served with the Gloucestershire Regiment, produced in this form by Lt. F.W. Harvey, D.C.M., 5<sup>th</sup> Glos. Regt., 1914-1918, and Home Guard, 1940.<sup>11</sup>

Research shows that around 80% of the pamphlet's content was actually from a BBC radio production in which Harvey had participated, titled 'The Thin Red Line, No. 9: The 28<sup>th</sup> and the 61<sup>st</sup> of Foot, The Gloucestershire Regiment', written by Francis Dillon.<sup>12</sup> This explains why the pamphlet was said to be 'produced in this form' by Harvey, rather than claiming to be authored by him. Harvey had retained two copies of Dillon's radio script. Dillon appears to have carried out original research, so the claim that records, letters, and diaries were used was probably true. However, Harvey gave Dillon and the BBC no credit in the pamphlet. He was not trying to pass Dillon's work off as his own: many men reading the pamphlet would have recognised the work from its June 1939 broadcasts. Rather, he was simply being careless with sources again, as he had been in *Comrades in Captivity*. Still, some words in the pamphlet are Harvey's own, and are quite telling. He ended the pamphlet with:

'Glorious' is a word which ranks with 'glamorous,' 'stupendous,' etc. The writer instinctively avoids it. What pleasure then, to find it for once justly

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<sup>11</sup> F.W. Harvey, ed., *Glorious Gloucesters* (Coleford: Gloucestershire Home Guard, [1943]), p. 1, GA, CPR, P88 MI 7.

<sup>12</sup> Francis Dillon, 'The Thin Red Line, No 9: The 28<sup>th</sup> and the 61<sup>st</sup> of Foot, The Gloucestershire Regiment' (BBC Radio Script), 1939, GA, FWH, D12912/9/2/17.

used (and in Press headings), used, moreover, of your mates now fighting, the boys you laughed and played with at school – so many of them.

‘Glorious Gloucesters’! May we be worthy of them!

*‘Keep step! keep step with the silent tread  
Of armies marching by:  
Lest ye should break the ranks of the dead  
And hear a poor ghost sigh!’<sup>13</sup>*

The poem is Harvey’s; a typescript copy is found among his papers.<sup>14</sup> He seems to have written it specifically for this publication, as it appears nowhere else. It makes his intent plain: to encourage the Home-Guard Gloucesters to live up to the memory of those who had gone before in the actual regiment – a memory sacred to Harvey. The target audience was those Home Guardsmen who were not veterans of the Gloucestershire Regiment, as veterans would not need a pamphlet to explain the need for regimental pride. Harvey makes this plain when he reminds the reader that the reader’s old schoolmates were now fighting as members of the regular Gloucestershire Regiment. Older men would not be likely to have many former schoolmates still fighting. He was targeting the younger men among the Home Guard, men he perhaps worried were not worthy to carry the name of the Gloucestershire Regiment, or else they would be fighting in the regulars or the Territorials themselves. His final comments inform the readers that the stories they had just read were ‘from the lips of **professional** soldiers’.<sup>15</sup> The bold word reminded the Home Guardsmen that they were not professionals, although Harvey attempted to encourage them by telling them of how effectively the ‘Kitchener’s Army’ citizen-soldier volunteers of the 7<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters had fought at Gallipoli.<sup>16</sup> Harvey knew the power of the

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<sup>13</sup> Harvey, *Glorious Gloucesters*, p. 16, GA, CPR, P88 MI 7. The lower-case ‘k’ used here is consistent between the poems use in the pamphlet and in typescript. It is possibly intentional.

<sup>14</sup> F.W. Harvey, ‘Keep Step’ (poem typescript), [1940], GA, FWH, D12912/3/1/9/9.

<sup>15</sup> Harvey, *Glorious Gloucesters*, p. 16, GA, CPR, P88 MI 7.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

written word to help forge morale in a unit, as he had seen how the 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette* had developed the *esprit de corps* and unit identity of his 1/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters.

As it turned out, Harvey even contributed to an attempt to re-establish the 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette* as the official paper of the activated Territorials of the 5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters. Although the spelling '*Fifth Gloster Gazette*' was now officially used, the revival was designated as Volume 2, with the first issue appearing in November 1939.<sup>17</sup> It seems that the serving Territorials were just as keen as Harvey to make connections between the two world wars – the cover of the new *Gazette* was an illustration of a First World War tommy handing an issue of the first run of the journal to a Second World War tommy. Chaplain Helm wrote the introduction, himself viewing the First World War with a tint of golden nostalgia. He claimed that 'Contributions simply poured in' from the very beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> *Gloucester Gazette*'s publication – a far cry from the reality of having to plead with battalion members to aid Harvey in keeping the publication afloat.<sup>18</sup> Harvey was certainly enthusiastic to participate in the revival of the periodical that had propelled him to fame, and wished to help the new run along. He wrote an article for the first issue, using humour that would have been familiar to his comrades in 1914-18:

[...] your 'Gazette,' [...] was the only paper we could procure in French Billets which refrained from telling us all about the war. What cared we what flank or cheek had been turned unless it belonged to Mademoiselle from Armentiers!<sup>19</sup> We resembled the Psalmist in our respect anyway, namely, that we did not 'exercise ourselves in matters too high' – unless they came from the Q.M.! We 'exercised' ourselves rather with those quips, jokes, and leg-pulls (crude enough at times, yet fine in both concealing and revealing that best of all things you find in an army:

<sup>17</sup> *Fifth Gloster Gazette*, November 1939, SoGM, (cover).

<sup>18</sup> George Francis Helm, 'L'envoi', *Fifth Gloster Gazette*, November 1939, p. 1, SoGM.

<sup>19</sup> Harvey chooses the Dutch spelling of the French-Flemish town usually known in the popular First World War song by its French name, Armentières.

comradeship), those courageous gaieties of the Fifth Gloucester Gazette.<sup>20</sup>

Although he peppered the article with the tommy humour from his own war, Harvey recognised that ‘This new army will evolve its own humour, different from Old Bill’s. It is as it should be. Times change’.<sup>21</sup> Harvey, like Helm, was telling something of an idealised tale, in claiming that nothing too serious had appeared in the *Gazette*. Much of his poetry in it was humorous, but much of it was also written in memory of fallen comrades, dealt with homesickness, or even went so far as to question the purpose of the war. Perhaps Harvey was being selective on purpose, in order to encourage the new 5<sup>th</sup> Gloucesters to seek humour in hardship, rather than to dwell on negativity. He stated that the humour of his generation of Gloucesters would be linked with that of the current Gloucesters

by two virtues recalled in the lines of Adam Lindsey Gordon – a poet Gloucestershire bred:

‘Life is mostly froth and bubble;  
Two things stand like a stone:  
Kindness in another’s trouble,  
Courage in your own.’<sup>22</sup>

Harvey encouraged them to find ‘Courage’ and ‘Kindness’, in the hope that the *Gazette* would continue to represent the same ‘courageous gaieties’ that it represented to him in memory. Harvey may have believed that it was best for these as yet un-tried soldiers to go to war just as he had stated that his friends did in ‘To Old Comrades, a Forest Offering’, as ‘singing soldiers scornful of the grave’. He did not find it necessary to warn them of the consequences of the war they were embarking on, knowing that they would gain such experience soon enough.

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<sup>20</sup> F.W. Harvey, ‘I Say “Boomps a Daisy”’, *Fifth Gloster Gazette*, November 1939, p. 3, SoGM.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

This first issue of the new *Gazette* also contained an article by Harvey titled 'Rogues' Gallery', with three comic poems that attacked their title figures: 'Goering', 'Goebbels', and 'Hitler'.<sup>23</sup> 'Goering' demonstrates that Harvey's beliefs had evolved past the anti-Semitic views of Chesterton. The poem takes aim at Hermann Göring's statement that 'The German man is the infinite superiority which Germany has over our so-called opponents. They cannot copy the German man. I refuse to place one German soldier as the equal of [soldiers of other races]'.<sup>24</sup> Harvey's poem replies that variety in people is what makes the world better, and to 'copy the German man' would be no benefit:

But copying was always boring,  
Or so I found it: didn't you?  
Dislike began at school and grew.<sup>25</sup>

He continues by noting that his daughter 'may set her eyebrows soaring, / And splash her lips whatever hue' in her attempts to copy

film stars: be they Jew  
Or purer-blooded Aryan;  
(A very difficult thing to do!).<sup>26</sup>

His sarcastic parenthetical statement on the difficulty of copying an 'Aryan' shows that he does not take the idea of Aryan superiority seriously, while also implying a superiority of English culture over Nazism, in that his daughter is not expected to discriminate against anyone, including Jews, in choosing whom to model herself after. Harvey gives his ultimate, unabashed opinion of fascism towards the end of the poem, stating that Nazi arrogance 'makes [him] want to laugh – or spue'.<sup>27</sup> His poem 'To 1939' in the next issue of the *Fifth Gloster*

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<sup>23</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'Rogues' Gallery', *Fifth Gloster Gazette*, November 1939, p. 10, SoGM.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

*Gazette* illustrates just how sinister he found Nazi rhetoric, as he claims that the past year was filled with 'Echoes of speech first uttered deep in hell'.<sup>28</sup>

Four issues of the revived *Fifth Gloster Gazette* would appear, and Harvey contributed to each. The issues of the new *Gazette* featured many clear homages to the first run, including sections similar to the old 'Things We Want to Know', and three newer versions of soldiers' alphabets in the tradition of Harvey's 'The Battalion A.B.C.'.<sup>29</sup> The similarities fade somewhat in the third and fourth issues. No issue appeared between December 1939 and December 1940, as the battalion deployed to France and was heavily engaged in fighting delaying actions before finally being evacuated at Dunkirk. By the time it returned to England, just one-quarter of the battalion remained intact.<sup>30</sup> The only content provided by Harvey in this third issue was a poem with the self-reflecting title 'For Gloster Lads', which was originally written to be printed on leaflets included in 'parcels of comforts and cigarettes' that were sent to the men while they were overseas.<sup>31</sup> In the poem, Harvey rather creatively hopes that the cigarette's smoke will remind the men 'of mist / Uprising purple, grey and amethyst' over the Gloucestershire hills, and of the smoke rising from chimneys 'Of towns and villages that wish you back'.<sup>32</sup> He could not resist making a connection with his own past service, ending the poem by stating that the parcels were sent by 'Men proud of their own [former] Regiment', who were 'now still prouder since you are its sons'.<sup>33</sup> The new *Gazette*, and the new war, helped him to renew that familial relationship with the Gloucesters.

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<sup>28</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'To 1939', *Fifth Gloster Gazette*, December 1939, p. 2, SoGM.

<sup>29</sup> 'A.B.C.', *Fifth Gloster Gazette*, December 1939, pp. 14-15, SoGM; 'Our Military Alphabet', *Fifth Gloster Gazette*, December 1940, p. 13, SoGM; D.D., 'ABC of 13 Platoon', *Fifth Gloster Gazette*, Autumn 1941, p. 10, SoGM.

<sup>30</sup> L.C.H., 'The Official Story', *Fifth Gloster Gazette*, December 1940, p. 20, SoGM.

<sup>31</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'For Gloster Lads', *Fifth Gloster Gazette*, December 1940, p. 9, SoGM.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

This *Fifth Gloster Gazette* was short-lived. The lengthy gaps between the last three issues reflected the fact that manoeuvre warfare would not allow for the publication of a journal in combat in the same way as static trench warfare. Nearly another year passed before the next and final issue, dated Autumn 1941. Soon thereafter, the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment was practically disbanded. It was reformed first as the 48<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Battalion, then re-designated as cavalry and renamed the 43<sup>rd</sup> Reconnaissance Regiment, while those men who could not qualify to serve as scouts were reassigned to other infantry units.<sup>34</sup> With this disbandment of the battalion, the *Fifth Gloster Gazette* was discontinued as well. There can be no doubt that Harvey was sad to see his battalion, and its journal, disappear.

Harvey enjoyed his time in the Home Guard and made the most of the camaraderie it afforded. His final contribution to the *Fifth Gloster Gazette* was an article on the Home Guard, which is quite similar to his novel in describing interactions with the colourful countryside characters that he served with: he describes how poachers' knowledge of the land was used on patrols, and how Foresters' wives would accompany patrols hoping to help catch a German spy – or perhaps, he implies, to ensure the men weren't just sneaking away to a pub or other mischiefs.<sup>35</sup> He ended the article with a poem that reflected invasion fears, promising to fight the enemy 'not perched on Vimy Ridge, / But on some well-loved hill'.<sup>36</sup> Harvey had come to believe that his warnings in 'If We Return' had come true: owing to the failures of the peace after the First World War, a second war had come that might truly cause 'English fields [to] blossom red'.

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<sup>34</sup> Richard Doherty, *The British Reconnaissance Corps in World War II* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing Ltd., 2007), p. 3, p. 8, p. 52.

<sup>35</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'The Home Guard', *Fifth Gloster Gazette*, Autumn 1941, p. 8-9, (p. 8), SoGM

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.



Patrolling with the Home Guard was not the only way that Harvey re-enacted his First World War service. He was proud of those days when he used his legal training to defend fellow soldiers who had been brought up on charges. He remarked in a 1921 letter that he had never found the law useful until he defended comrades in courts martial:

The 8<sup>th</sup> August in that year [1914] saw him wearing a private's uniform in the 5<sup>th</sup> Gloucestershire Regiment: and for the first time in his life, law became really useful, since he was able as prisoner's friend to appear in two courts martial of men accused of sleeping on guard & (by dint of a ruthless cross-examination of his superior officers) obtain their acquittal. This, one may imagine, gave great pleasure to the little man.<sup>37</sup>

In *Comrades in Captivity* he highlighted his role acting as surreptitious legal counsel to POWs brought up for courts martial by German prison authorities. (He implied that POWs were not allowed legal counsel, so his involvement in preparing them for examination was kept secret).<sup>38</sup> Harvey managed to continue this activity in the next war. Once an individual had volunteered for the Home Guard, he was required by law to report for certain duties and training. Failure to comply would result in prosecution in civil courts rather than courts martial, as Home Guardsmen were still technically civilians. Harvey took on at least one client who was prosecuted for nonattendance, arguing that the man's health was too poor for service. He added that 'as an old soldier and Home Guardsman himself he would hate to have the defendant with him when there was a scrap on'.<sup>39</sup> Harvey kept a newspaper article describing the case pasted in a scrapbook alongside other articles related to his Home Guard service, indicating the link he saw between this service and his defence of a fellow Guardsman in court. Had Harvey held any positions of authority in the Home

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<sup>37</sup> Scrapbook of F.W. Harvey, GA, CEH, D3921.II.38.

<sup>38</sup> Harvey, *Comrades*, pp. 291-92.

<sup>39</sup> 'Coleford Petty Sessions – Three Home Guard Absentees', [1943], found in F.W. Harvey's loose scrapbook pages, GA, FWH, D12912/6/1/14, fol. 44.

Guard, then he might not have been able to take such cases owing to conflict of interests. It is possible that he chose to serve as a private so that he could continue to see himself as the voice – and defender – of the common man.

Despite the renewed pride and camaraderie that Harvey found in the Home Guard, he knew, as 'Remembrance Day, 1940' stated, that his generation's 'soldier sons' must carry the true burden of the war. Within his own family, Harvey's son Patrick served with the Gloucesters and was wounded twice (severely the second time) while Eileen worked for the RAF.<sup>40</sup> Harvey's own service ended on 31 December 1944, when all Home Guardsmen were stood down as the threat of invasion had passed.<sup>41</sup>

Harvey's personal renaissance during the war may have helped him to secure a publishing deal. In 1946, Oliver & Boyd contracted Harvey to publish a selection of his poetry, which would include some new poems as well.<sup>42</sup> Titled *Gloucestershire – A Selection from the Poems of F.W. Harvey*, it would be the final collection of his own poetry that he would see published, and would highlight his most important and enduring poems. It is no surprise that the First World War was present throughout the collection, especially given that Hugh Walker (to whom the collection was dedicated) helped to edit it and wrote the introduction. Totalling 113 poems, it contained a fifteen-poem subsection titled 'War'. Thirty-seven poems were selected from his First World War volumes, with eight additional poems written later on the subject of the war.<sup>43</sup> Both the preface by T. Hannam-Clark and Walker's introduction highlighted Harvey's wartime service and war poetry, with Walker particularly emphasising Harvey's

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<sup>40</sup> Boden, p. 312.

<sup>41</sup> Home Guard Service Certificate, GA, FWH, D12912/7/4.

<sup>42</sup> Copy of a Letter from F.W. Harvey to Oliver & Boyd, 25 July 1946, GA, FWH, D12912/1/4/163.

<sup>43</sup> *Ducks, and Other Verses* is counted here as a wartime publication, as many of its poems were written during the war or directly after while Harvey was in the Netherlands.

POW days and the writing of 'Ducks'.<sup>44</sup> With this collection, the sun set on Harvey's public career as a poet. That the First World War featured so heavily in its pages is fitting, as it was the war which gave him his opportunity for fame. After this, Harvey disappeared from the public stage for nearly a decade, until a BBC radio appearance in 1955.

Harvey had been active in veterans' organisations and charities since the end of the First World War. His popularity among local veterans is clear, as many of the programmes that he saved from reunions and events contain original poems by him, requested by the organisers just for the occasion. In 1947, the veterans of Yorkley decided to form their own branch of the British Legion, electing Harvey to be president of the chapter.<sup>45</sup> A letter from the forming committee indicates that Harvey had no involvement in the creation of the branch, although the committee elected him unanimously to be president and then invited him to accept.<sup>46</sup> This fitted well with the Cincinnatus-like image that Harvey had created for himself, as one who, having retreated from his middle-class upbringing to live among the poor and downtrodden, was still elected to an office without standing for it.

The First World War remained at the forefront of Harvey's thoughts through his declining years. In 1952 he wrote a still-unpublished short story titled 'A Holiday Enforced'.<sup>47</sup> A first person narrative, it recounts a day in which the speaker (in this case, Harvey himself) is driven out of his house by his irate wife. He decides to take a walk in the woods, and in so doing is inspired to write a poem. Lacking paper, he borrows a scrap of newspaper from a fellow hiker. Later he finds a one-legged man in the woods who is preparing to place a bet,

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<sup>44</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire – A Selection*, pp. xii-xiv.

<sup>45</sup> It did not receive the prefix 'Royal' until 1971.

<sup>46</sup> Howard Lintle to F.W. Harvey, 14 October 1947, GA, FWH, D12912/1/5/89.

<sup>47</sup> F.W. Harvey, 'A Holiday Enforced' (author's manuscript), 1952, GA, FWH, D12912/3/3/46.

and it just so happens that the paper given to Harvey is the *Daily Mail's* horse-racing tips. The man leaves to place his bet, then returns, advising Harvey that he should visit a local pub and place a bet on a horse that was given only 10/1 odds. Harvey does so. He uses this story to criticise modern literature:

According to the fashionable pessimistic end required by short-stories the horse should have lost. He did not. Or the 'bookie' should have 'bilked' – if that is the term. He did not. The true and happy ending of my tale is that I won ten pounds and was in addition refunded my pound stake money.<sup>48</sup>

The bookie, pleased that most other customers had bet on losing horses, even buys Harvey a drink.<sup>49</sup>

Taken superficially, the story is merely a happy one of Harvey's character winning a bet because of serendipitous circumstances. Yet shades of the First World War are present throughout the story. Harvey opens by noting that he had just written his will – a sign that he knows his health is in decline – and that it is 21 March, Back Badge Day to the Gloucestershire Regiment.<sup>50</sup> He explains the meaning of Back Badge Day, and then apologises to the reader for making a digression, stating that 'an old soldier who has been turned from hearth and home by his loving spouse must think of something'.<sup>51</sup> Referring to himself as an 'old soldier' thirty-three years after leaving the Gloucesters (and eight after the disbanding of the Home Guard), Harvey shows the extent to which the army was still a part of his identity. Following this aside, he continues his story with no mention of the war – although the fellow gambler's wooden leg

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Back Badge Day celebrates the actions of the 28<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot (a Gloucestershire Regiment predecessor) at the 21 March 1801 Aboukir landings. In the battle following the landings, the 28<sup>th</sup> found itself fighting French infantry to its front, with cavalry charging their rear. Having no time to form an anti-cavalry square, the acting commander, Lieutenant Colonel Chambers, gave an unorthodox command for the rear rank only to face to the rear and fire into the French cavalry, saving the right flank of the entire army. For this action, the 28<sup>th</sup> and later the Gloucestershire Regiment were the only British regiment allowed to wear cap badges on the back of their headgear as well as the front. The Rifles Regiment continues this tradition today.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

can certainly be taken as an allusion to the casualties of war. After relating how he collected his winnings and had a drink with his bookie, Harvey finishes with: 'So ends the day and my story which ought perhaps to have been entitled "A Scrap of Paper". But that reminds me too much of the 1914-1918 war which I would rather forget, and the present title is true and will do for me'.<sup>52</sup> 'A Scrap of Paper' refers to the 1914 German Imperial Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg's reported dismissal of the treaty ensuring Belgian neutrality as a mere 'scrap of paper'.<sup>53</sup> With this, a story which has nothing to do with the war ends with a nearly irrelevant mention of it. Harvey claims that he 'would rather forget' the war, yet his story opens by relating the pride that he felt in his former regiment, and establishing his identity as 'an old soldier'.<sup>54</sup> He may have preferred to forget parts of the war, but he was far from wishing it gone from his memory. It was too much of his identity, so much so that it opens and closes a story that has nothing whatsoever to do with it.

On 18 January 1956, the BBC paid tribute to Harvey's life and works with a radio broadcast titled 'Sing a Song of Gloucestershire'. Harvey himself featured only briefly in the performance, as he was in particularly bad health by this point. (Boden states, based on recollections of the producer, that Harvey attended pre-performance meetings in pyjamas.)<sup>55</sup> The programme was conceived by Charles Brewer (son of Sir Herbert Brewer, the Gloucester Cathedral organist and early Gurney mentor) who stated that he 'could never understand why the BBC so often waits until a man is dead before his achievements are commemorated'.<sup>56</sup> It was certainly a wonderful thing for

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> 'German View of Treaties. "A Scrap of Paper"', *The Times*, 19 August 1914, p. 8, *The Times* Digital Archive online.

<sup>54</sup> Harvey, 'A Holiday Enforced', GA, FWH, D12912/3/3/46.

<sup>55</sup> Boden, p. 332.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 325, p. 332.

Harvey to see his work still appreciated, and to have one last chance to make his voice heard (literally and figuratively) before a large audience.

Harvey's health continued to deteriorate, and he rarely left his house from this point on, as Anne nursed him herself.<sup>57</sup> He died on 13 February 1957, and despite his conversion to Roman Catholicism, his wishes were honoured and his funeral took place at the Anglican St. Peter's Church in Minsterworth, where he was also buried. The inscription on Harvey's tombstone highlights with simplicity the three most important aspects of his life:

In  
Loving memory  
of  
Frederick William Harvey D.C.M.  
Soldier and Poet  
Born 26.3.88. Died 13.2.57  
'A Gloucestershire lad'<sup>58</sup>

Soldier, Poet, Gloucestershire lad. Even in epitaph, Harvey's military service and wartime publication took the prominent place in his life's story.

### Legacy

On 29 May 2013, the online arts and entertainment magazine *So Glos* ran an announcement:

Following the storming success of its in-house production of *Cider with Rosie* in 2013, the Everyman Theatre will be presenting an epic tale of Gloucestershire this summer, entitled *Will Harvey's War*.

[...] *Will Harvey's War* marks the official launch of the *Gloucestershire Remembers World War I* initiative between the Everyman, The Wilson [art museum], The History Press, Gloucestershire Archives and the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum – commemorating the centenary of the start of the First World War.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 344.

<sup>58</sup> At the death of Sarah Anne Harvey, the inscription was extended with 'Also of / Sarah Anne Harvey / Wife of the above / Died July 27<sup>th</sup> 1972 aged 82 Years'.

<sup>59</sup> 'Will Harvey's War at Everyman Theatre', *So Glos*, 29 May 2014 <<http://www.soglos.com/theatre/36753/Will-Harveys-War-at-Everyman-Theatre>> [accessed 19 May 2015].

Although Harvey's novel was unpublished in his lifetime and for decades after, it became the fitting centrepiece to Gloucestershire's centenary commemorations of the First World War. This was made possible because work on the Harvey papers had begun just as centenary preparations were being made, and the Gloucestershire Archives had ensured that the University of Exeter's F.W. Harvey REACT awardee was able to sit in on the planning sessions for the county commemorations. The allure of the war poets has grown since Harvey's day, and the organisers wanted to produce a play based on one of Gloucestershire's two famous soldier-poets, Harvey or Gurney. Informed of the discovery of Harvey's novel – a novel that was in its own right a memorial to Gloucestershire's lost sons – the creative director at the Everyman Theatre felt that it was fitting that the 'Laureate of Gloucestershire', a man who had dedicated so much to remembering lost comrades, should be the voice to launch four years of commemoration.

Harvey's cultural impact in Gloucestershire has never been questioned, but it has seen greater recognition in recent years. His recognition at a national level, too, deserves a renaissance. Rediscovery of Harvey's papers has done much to awaken national interest in his legacy. Even prior to this recognition, Harvey had never been completely forgotten. His work has been a mainstay in First World War poetry anthologies ever since it was published. He featured in the first major anthology to come from the war, Osborn's *The Muse in Arms* (1917), and made the cut again when Brereton's *An Anthology of War Poems* (1930) began to establish the post-war notion of the First World War poetry canon. Harvey appeared in Gardiner's *Up the Line to Death* (1964), which can

be credited with beginning to establish our current notion of the war's poetic legacy.<sup>60</sup>

One undoubted reason for Harvey's recent fall into neglect is that his voice does not easily lend itself to the demonstration of the futility of war. As we have seen, despite believing the war was a necessary evil, and despite his post-war disenchantment, he never saw the war as complete futility – a stance shared by more poets of the war than is popularly believed (though this is rarely seen in the presentation of their most-commonly selected poems). Harvey's voice was heard by, and influenced, many during the war, proven by the quoting of 'If We Return' in *The Times* alongside news of the armistice on 11 November 1918. That his work was so highly regarded in his own time is reason enough for us to reconsider our neglect of him. Harvey was never a major poet, but he was – and still should be – prominent among the important minor poets of the war.

Harvey's inclusion in the mainstream First World War literary canon should be based on his critical role in the early success of the trench press – a topic which has considerable hold on the current public perception of the war – and, most importantly, on what he tells us about the POW experience. Poems such as 'In Flanders' and 'Gonnehem' demonstrate that the trench press often provided the men at the front with sophisticated poetry of a quality that makes it still deserving of the public's interest. His very best trench poems, such as 'If We Return', reveal that these men had ideals that transcended blind patriotism; ideals which set them up for the post-war disenchantment which so dominates our understanding of the war now. Harvey further expands the limits of the canon with his POW poems, the best of which broaden our understanding of the

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<sup>60</sup> Das, p. 6.



war by giving voice to the thousands of POWs held by all nations during the war. Harvey never spoke of futility as a fighting man at the front, but did indeed express the utter futility of a POW's life:

Heeding no Present, to the Future dead,  
Nodding quite foolish by the warm fireside  
And seeing no flame, but only in the red  
And flickering embers, pictures of the past: –  
Life like a cinder fading black at last.<sup>61</sup>

An appreciation of Harvey's rightful place in the First World War poetic canon has the potential to revive the voices of the hundreds of thousands of trench journal readers and POWs for whom he spoke.

Confirmation of his worthiness for further recognition can be seen in Vivian Noakes's decision to make him one of the two most quoted poets (with eleven poems) in her acclaimed *Voices of Silence – The Alternative Book of First World War Poetry* (2006), which sought to revive the work of those poets whose work was, she argued, a 'more characteristic [response] to the war' than what is found in standard anthologies.<sup>62</sup>

Was Harvey characteristic? He was certainly popular at the time, but it is the uncharacteristic nature of his service compared to that of other significant poets that causes him to stand out. Unlike most of the well-known soldier-poets, Harvey served in combat in both the ranks and as an officer. Granted, Harvey was not a typical private, being something of a 'gentleman-ranker' whose background was more officer-class than working-class. Still, his poetry from his time in the ranks is an insight into the immediate thoughts of a soldier who is seeking mental relief after a day's hard work, or from weeks in the trenches, standing sentry duty and sleeping outside of the relative comfort of a dugout.

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<sup>61</sup> Harvey, *Gloucestershire Friends*, p. 17.

<sup>62</sup> Noakes, p. xi.

Not only did his early poetry reflect such a life because he lived it, but also because his early audience was gained through a trench newspaper. His use of the trench press is again uncharacteristic among the well-known poets of the war; of the other soldier-poets now considered noteworthy voices of the war, only the equally-neglected Gilbert Frankau was published in it. Harvey's most important legacy, however, is his POW poetry. Around 185,000 British POWs were held by Germany (6.5 million POWs were taken by all belligerents).<sup>63</sup> Harvey was without doubt the most poetically talented, expressive, and well-published English-speaking voice to reach us from inside the *Gefangenenlager*. At this point he was an officer and not typical of the majority of POWs, but had he been in the ranks during his capture then he never would have had time, nor probably the energy, to write, and the German authorities certainly would not have allowed him to send work home for publication.

His ability in adversity to find humour, or to revel in natural beauty – even if that beauty was only found in memory – is one of the most admirable aspects of his poetry. It reflected the spirit that was, and always has been, necessary for soldiers to endure the most demoralising of conditions. A small note on the inside cover of Harvey's 'A New England' manuscript, written during his late captivity and one of the darkest points of his life, succinctly summarises Harvey's approach to life and to poetry – an approach that no doubt helped him through many hardships. The note is titled 'The poet's attitude':

Life may be pleasant or unpleasant but it is a miracle. (This creation of God's) It cannot fail to fill me with wonder and often with gratitude. And that is the key note of my philosophy – which I cannot help.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> John Yarnall, *Barbed Wire Disease – British & German Prisoners of War, 1914-1919* (Stroud: Spellmount, 2011), p. 6.

<sup>64</sup> Harvey, 'New England' (MS), GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 3.

Illustrations

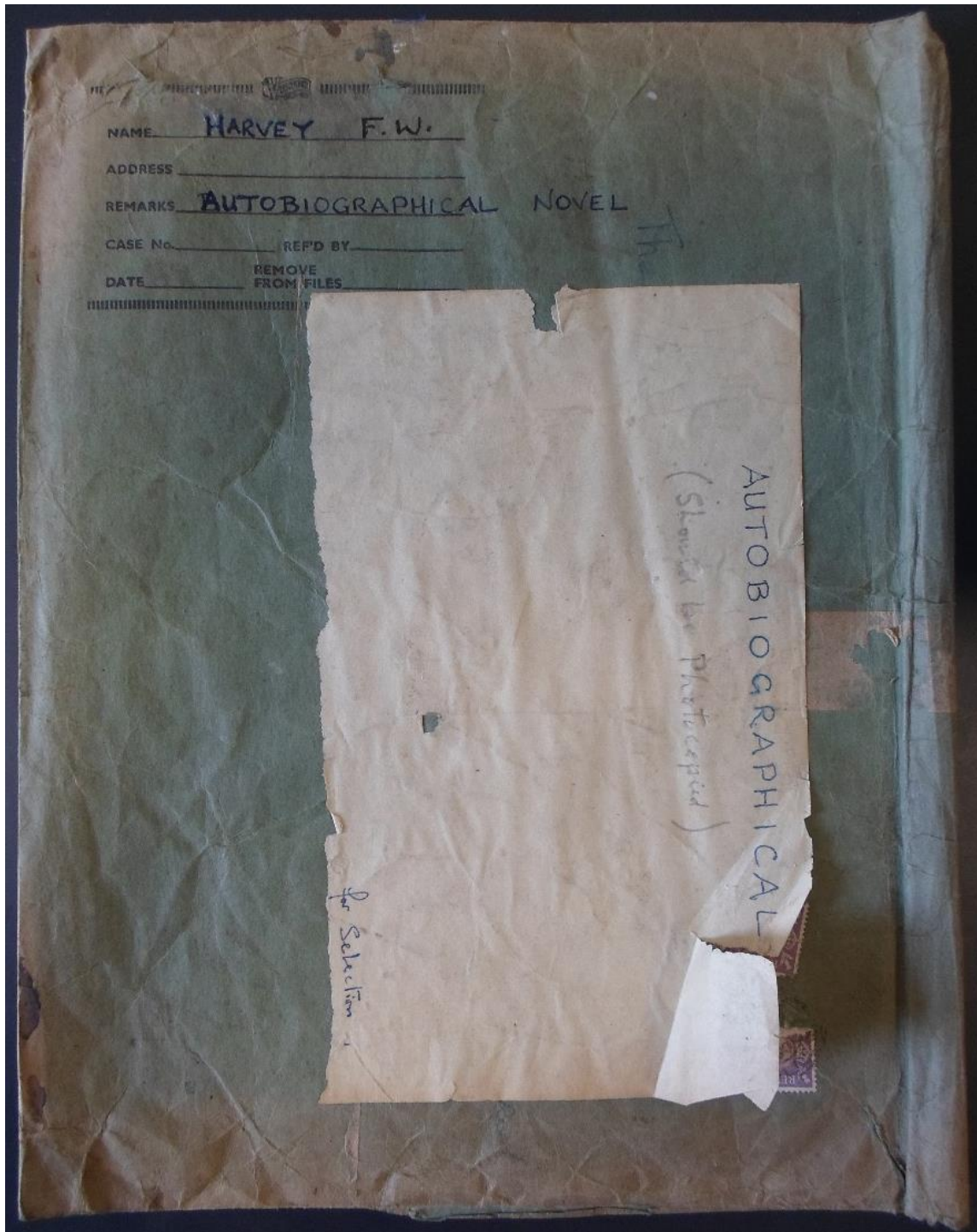


Figure 1 – The envelope that contained Harvey’s novel. GA, FWH, D12912/3/2/1

The Gospel of  
 Patroling ~~Notes~~ to Brother Guards { Nov: 26. Tu.  
 " 28. Th.

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Introduction: - { <sup>wood in</sup> 3 Books - } <sup>Crichton - play</sup> <sup>- has to mistake</sup> <sup>But.</sup>  
 Personal How not to  
 Obscure - patrol  
 Esquire is easier to answer.  
 (Kipling's 39 - Methods - Mistakes - Crichton.)

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A. 3 Indisputable principles 1. Morale (Citizen)  
 { Fear.  
 3 stories.  
 Dr. Johnson.

2. Discipline (Soldier)  
 (a) Obedience (Spoken or not.) Scales = min.  
 (b) Carry out orders without big words. (Football)  
 "Upon thy belly shall thou go" 3. Initiation (Patroller)

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B. 3 Indisputable principles of Patrolling (Hinder)  
 { <sup>Fight = Informant.</sup>  
 1. To see without being seen (Fence)  
 2. To hear without being heard (Coy)  
 3. To kill without being killed (Festina Lento)  
 or till "Tall on"  
 Arms • Camouflage. • Diamond formation •  
 Suggests • • • (Messages back) = 1000 lines. A bit  
 Drink good informant may

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C. Methods disputable But - Principles stay N.S. <sup>Wimpier</sup> <sup>Deaths</sup>

Figure II – One page of Harvey's patrolling notes. GA, FWH, D12912/7/1



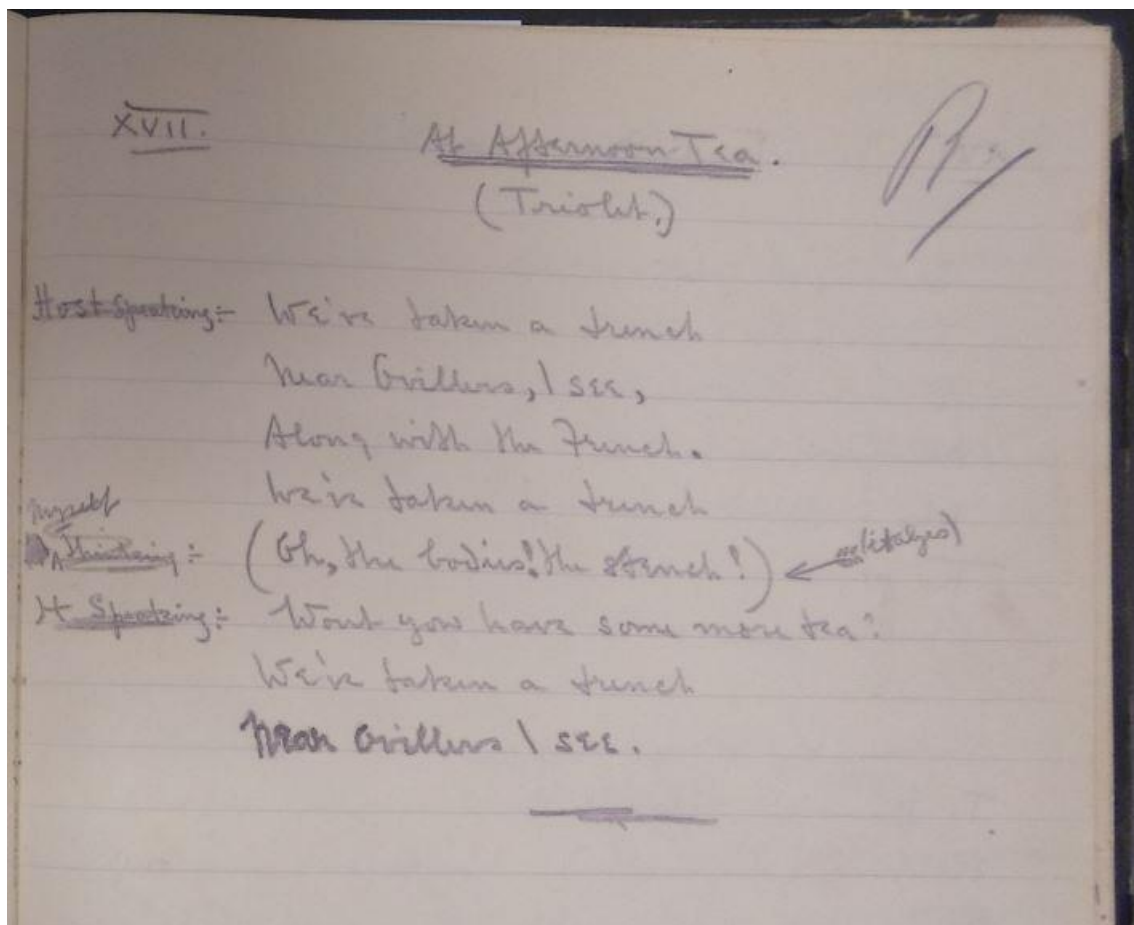


Figure IV – Harvey's manuscript for 'At Afternoon Tea', showing edits to cues.

GA, FWH, D12912/2/1/3/Notebook 2

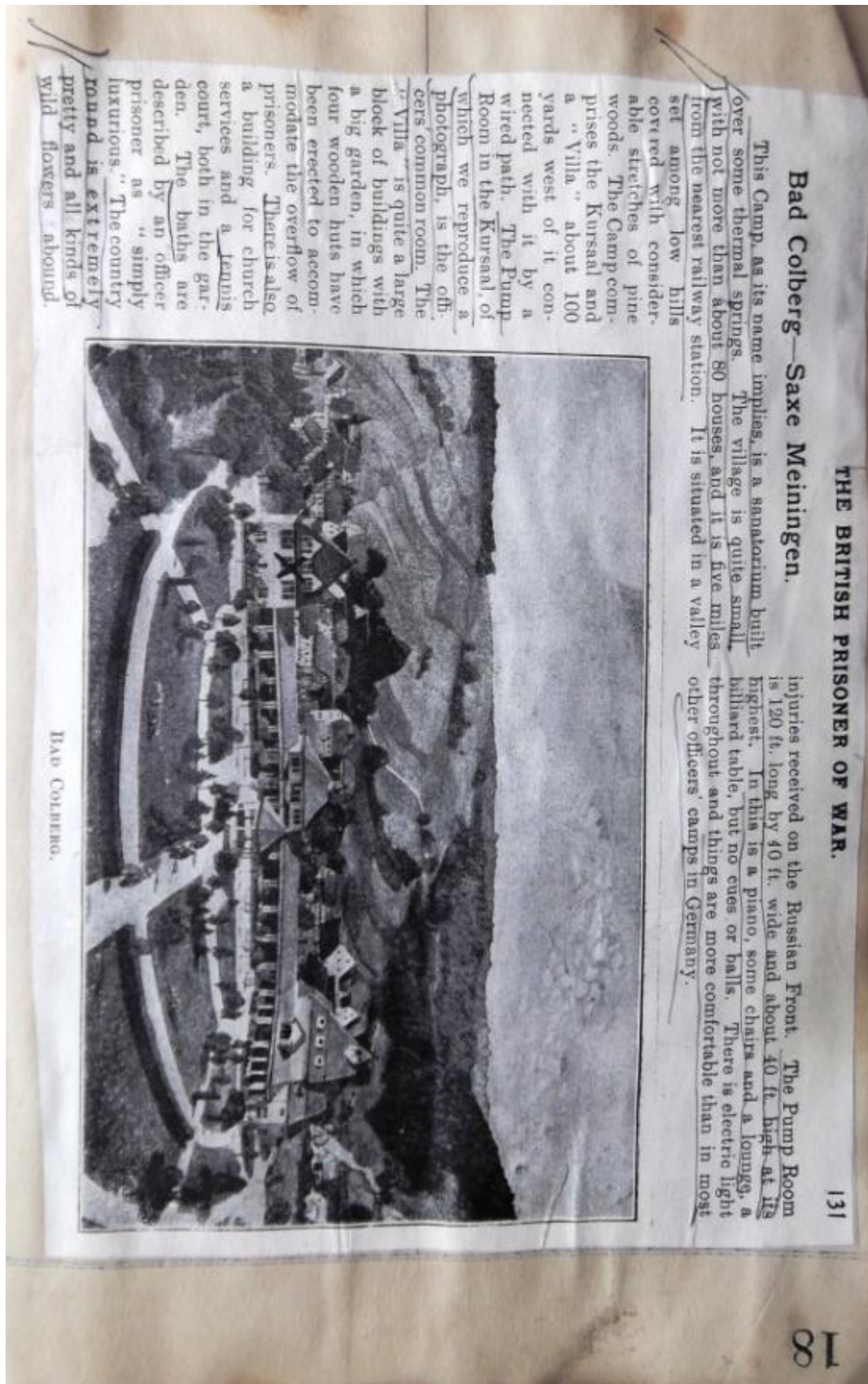


Figure V – Article from *The British Prisoner of War* (November 1918).

The text was clearly used by Harvey in *Comrades in Captivity*. Found in F.W.

## A Note on Military Terminology

Misunderstanding of the administration of the British Army in the First World War has sometimes led to errors in our understanding of the war poets' service, Harvey's included. It is important that analysis of the war's literature maintains a solid understanding of military history. Harvey served in the Gloucestershire Regiment during the First World War, in the 1/5<sup>th</sup>, 2/5<sup>th</sup>, and 3/5<sup>th</sup> Battalions. The British Army of the First World War was based on a regimental system, in which regiments raised several battalions which maintained certain ties and traditions, but those battalions did not generally fight alongside each other. The battalions were instead attached individually to various divisions, as needed. Prior to the war, the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> battalions of most regiments were Territorial Forces battalions, the precursor to the current Territorial Army – essentially part-time soldiers until they were mobilised. As the army expanded, so too did the Territorial battalions. Those soldiers who were in the Territorial battalions at the beginning of the war, or who joined in the first months, and who volunteered for foreign service – not then a requirement for Territorials, although that changed during the war – were designated as the 1/X<sup>th</sup> Battalion. Those who did not volunteer, along with later recruits, were separated into the 2/X<sup>th</sup> Battalions. These were often referred to as 'first-line Territorials' and 'second-line Territorials' respectively; however, this was not an indication of fighting ability as is commonly believed. Eventually, 3/X<sup>th</sup> Battalions were created for training and home defence.<sup>1</sup> The first and second-line Territorial battalions were in most senses completely independent of each other, and were

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<sup>1</sup> Regular Army and New Army battalions were never split thus. The Regular Army generally kept the 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> battalions of each regiment, while the volunteers of the New Army (popularly called 'Kitchener's Army') were simply organised into new whole-numbered battalions, generally starting from 7.



used as such by the army. (At one point, the 1/5<sup>th</sup> Gloucestershire Regiment was fighting in Italy while the 2/5<sup>th</sup> remained in the Western Front). Such territorial battalions liked to keep their own regimental officers, so officers were often moved between the first and second-line battalions following promotions. Such was the case with F.W. Harvey.

The men and battalions of the Gloucestershire Regiment are often referred to as simply 'Gloucesters'.

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